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THE RELATIONSHIP OF EXPRESSED VISION AND INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISION IN A SELECTED SCHOOL DISTRICT

A Dissertation Submitted to the
College of Graduate Studies and Research
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in the
Department of Educational Administration
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University of Saskatchewan

By
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between the vision of a selected school district and practices it has undertaken in the area of instructional supervision in two schools. The school district was identified through a reputational survey process as one having exemplary instructional supervision practices. This case study used qualitative techniques drawing upon principles of naturalistic inquiry. Semi-structured interviews, document analysis, and observation, with accompanying field-notes, represented the major forms of data collection.

Interviews were conducted with the Superintendent, the Director of Education Services, the Board Chair, the Coordinator of Human Resources, an Area Supervisor, two principals, and seven teachers (representing the two schools). Observations were conducted at the school sites and district office. District level and school-based documents were analyzed. The data collection process began in the schools and subsequently moved to system-level investigation.

A conceptual framework based upon the policy perspectives of Guba (1984) guided the study. Vision as meta-policy (Downey, 1988), policy-in-intention, policy-in-action, and policy-in-experience were used as a frame for the analysis of policy and practice.

There was a low level of awareness of the *expressed vision* of the district among the respondents. Most of the respondents identified only one or two elements in their description of the vision. Paradoxically, all respondents seemed to feel that they were working in harmony with the vision of the Board. "*Implied vision*" was used to describe the interpretations placed by school personnel on the actions and words of the board and

senior staff. This phenomenon presented a vision different from the *expressed vision* of the system. The implied vision seemed to suggest a clear direction to those in the organization, but it was not necessarily consistent with the expressed vision.

An examination of the relationship between the elements of the vision and the formal instructional supervision program (the PPP) revealed congruency on four of six elements. The examination of *policy-in-experience* showed that the PPP was operationalized as it was espoused in the policy, but from different perspectives, and with different levels of detail from school to school. More important, the implementation of the PPP seemed to depend on the actions and the direction of the principals, who had adapted the formal policy to their own styles and to current trends. The leadership provided by the principal emerged from the data as critical to the success of the supervision process in both schools. The term '*policy-alive*' was suggested to describe the impact on student learning and professional growth that a principal can have through the instructional supervision process.

The findings highlighted the need for communication and ongoing dialogue to maximize congruence among vision, policy, and practice. This process should be planned to avoid the drift to multiple interpretations or implied vision.

A heuristic was presented, integrating vision, policy, and outcomes. The heuristic tied together some of the learnings from the study and gave a visual representation of the systemic functions of vision and instructional supervision.

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CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM

A compelling shared vision has emerged in the literature as a strong indicator of success in a school or school district ((DuFour 2004; DuFour & Eaker, 1998; Lambert, 2003; Leiberman, 1995; Leithwood, Jantzi & Steinbach, 1999; Senge, 1990). While many factors influence the learning of students, a shared vision is believed to be an important part of creating the environment for high achievement. "There is no more powerful engine driving an organization toward excellence and long-range success than an attractive, worthwhile and achievable vision of the future, widely shared" (Nanus, as cited in Leithwood, Jantzi & Steinbach, 1999). Instructional supervision is an ongoing process in schools and school districts (Sergiovanni and Starrett, 2002) and has been studied by many (Pajak, 2000). However, there is little research to link instructional supervision to the vision of a school district. This study focused on the possible relationship between expressed vision and one of the major tasks in a school district: instructional supervision.

Successful organizations have a positive and inspiring vision (Barker, 1991). It could be said that the power of vision should inspire every employee to contribute and support the direction of the organization. Vision has been defined as an organization's "sense of where it wants to go" (Barth & Pansegrau, 1994, p. 3).

Rideout, McKay, and Morton (2004) conducted a study on effective school visioning process. Their hypothesis was that "visioning strategy" (p. 71) could be the link between the leader and the functioning of the organization, and is important for a leadership strategy. Leithwood, et al. (1999) focused on the setting of direction by

leadership through building a shared vision, developing consensus about goals, and creating high performance expectations. Leithwood et al. concentrated on how such commitment could be created. They found that leaders who helped the organization to identify and articulate a vision may not have been attributed with charisma by colleagues, but they helped to identify new opportunities for the organization.

Leiberman (1995) studied schools where a shared vision was created through a "bottom-up" (p. 7) authentic process. This process built support, over time, engaging staff in discussion, supporting a vision, acting on that vision, and then inventing ways to make it a reality. Lambert (2003) discussed the consistency of *behaviour* with *vision*. Questions were asked such as: "Will the program being considered enable you to implement your vision" (p. 86)? At the school level, commitment to a shared vision has been found to provide coherence to programs and learning practices. "Without coherence, wonderful classrooms operate next door to poor ones, and pioneering instructional practices are under the same roof as ones that were long ago discredited" (p. 6).

If the vision were clear enough, an argument could be made that a vision operated as meta-policy (Downey, 1988), guiding policy development in all areas. According to Downey, meta-policy can help address some persistent problems at the local governance level, such as lack of continuity and perceived inconsistency of board direction. Senge (1990, 2000) said there must be systems thinking if the vision is to have a proper foundation, and in the school context this means applying the vision in establishing the priorities of the leadership tasks or the policy initiatives undertaken in a school or a school district. "Visions spread because of a reinforcing process of

increasing clarity, enthusiasm, communication, and commitment" (Senge, 1990, p. 207). On a related note, Blase and Blase (2001) linked vision to staff development and empowering teachers when they argued that curriculum, teaching, and learning should be the focus of a school's vision because successful school improvement processes, driven by empowered professionals, have unerringly maintained this focus. It can be seen that there needs to be a big picture vision at the district level to guide policy development, while it must be continually clarified and reinforced to drive instructional and learning practice at the school level. One link to student learning is through instructional supervision.

Does instructional supervision have an impact on teaching and learning? Perhaps looking at how it is approached would help to start to answer this question. Instructional supervision continues to be an ongoing task in school divisions (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2002). Four families of instructional supervision were articulated by Pajak (2000): *Original Clinical Models, Humanistic/Artistic Models, Technical/Didactic Models,* and *Developmental/Reflective Models*. These families of supervision help to categorize a summary of the literature on supervision since the 1950s. The Original Clinical Models reflect the work of Cogan and Goldhammer, and offer a blend of empirical, phenomenological, and developmental perspectives. The Humanistic/Artistic Models are based on the work on Eisner and Blumberg which considered existential and aesthetic principles. The Technical/Didactic Models summarize the work of Hunter, Acheson and Gall, Joyce and Showers and others, and rely heavily on the effective teaching research and the implementation of "proven" skills. The Developmental/Reflective Models refer to the work of Glickman, Costa, and Garmston,

among others, and are sensitive to refection, individual differences, and contextual factors in the supervision process.

Instructional supervision has been described as the developmental process of teacher improvement (Glickman, Gordon & Ross-Gordon, 2001). Glickman (1981), Glickman et al. (2001), and Glatthorn (1990) suggested that supervisory style and orientation have a strong impact on the supervision process and the individual development of teachers. Ralph (2000) showed that when there was a match between supervisor style and supervisee ability on a developmental grid, teacher skill development was enhanced. It makes sense, then, that supervision would look different for different people within the learning community. Siens and Ebmeier (1996) compared the developmental supervision process to a more traditional purely clinical model. Siens and Ebmeier found that developmental supervision substantially enhanced the reflective thinking skills of teachers. In a comprehensive study, Ebmeier and Nicklaus (1999) examined the effect of developmental supervision on five teacher affective variables (commitment to teaching, commitment to school, trust in administration, trust in teachers, and desire for collaboration) and two personal decision variables (efficacy expectations and outcome expectations; p. 351). Statistically significant positive results were yielded on all dependent measures when developmental supervision was implemented by principals. Implementation by teachers yielded statistically significant positive effects for the collaboration and commitment to teaching scales. This study suggested that collaborative supervision can play a major role in increasing teachers' commitment, collaboration, efficacy, and trust (p. 378).

To enhance the learning of teachers, Glatthorn (1990) believed there must be significant commitment to the supervision process from those involved. He said that when there is effective supervision of instruction, administrators, team leaders, and teachers cooperate in providing supervisory services that provide frequent feedback to teachers, focus on instructional improvement, emphasize student achievement, and foster collaboration and cooperation.

Good and Brophy (1987) noted that classrooms are active places and teachers are so busy responding that they have little time to think deeply about what they are doing. They stated: "Teachers are seldom observed on any systematic basis. Consequently, they seldom get valuable information about ways to increase their effectiveness, and when they are observed it is typically for purposes of evaluation" (p. 50). Good and Brophy suggested that observation in classrooms can help to address some of these issues through the development of language to identify specific classroom behaviours and practices. They felt that peer observation and collaborative practices were underutilized as mechanisms to enhance the instructional process.

Sullivan and Glanz (2000) stated that supervisory leadership for the 21st century requires a different set of skills: enhanced collaborative relationships, participatory decision-making, reflective listening and practice, and teacher self-direction; all of which emanate from the constructivist paradigm. The work of Joyce and Showers (1988) indicated the importance of coaching in the classroom for the implementation of change. Costa and Garmston (1994) argued that the only lasting change comes from within, and to unlock a teacher's ability to examine his or her teaching is the primary purpose of a coach/supervisor.

A number of studies have found positive correlation between collaborative supervisory practices and aspects of teaching or learning success (Dell'olio, 1998; Gleave, 1997; Greene, 1992; Hyun & Marshall, 1996; McBride & Skau, 1995; Munson, 1998; Wallace, 1998; Zepeda, 2002; Zepeda & Ponticell, 1998). Recent studies link the instructional skills of teachers to student achievement (Marzano, 2003; Varley, 2005).

Fullan (2001) and Hargreaves (2003) spoke to the need for collaborative cultures in schools. Fullan noted that many corporations (and the U.S. Army) espouse that high quality relationships and collaboration are vital to the organization's success (p. 82). DuFour (2004) and DuFour and Eaker (1998) advocated for a culture of collaboration within a professional learning community.

In a school that operates as a learning community, teachers engage in peer coaching and visit each other's classrooms often in order to help improve instruction (Pajak, 2000). The emphasis is on generating data and engaging in conversations with colleagues about teaching and learning to develop a store of professional knowledge through instructionally focused action research. Duffy (1997, 2000) argued that the way to transform teaching and learning throughout a school district is to transform that system into a high-performing community of learners, an idea reinforced more recently by the word of DuFour (2004). Duffy argued for Knowledge Work Supervision (KWS) as a different approach to instructional supervision.

Themes drawn from the literature suggested to me that successful supervision is a complex and difficult process, and that there are many factors influencing the efficacy of the process (Ebmeier, 2003; Rettig, 2000). Glickman et al. (2001) spoke of "SuperVision" (p. 8) and defined it as: "a common vision of what teaching and learning

can and should be, developed collaboratively by supervisors, teachers, and other members of the school community." Lambert (2003) discussed the need for coherence of educational practices with the vision of a school district. Everything that adults are doing in school and that students are learning should be consistent with the vision. If vision is a driving force behind practice, then the relationship of vision with educational practices would be of keen interest to leaders in education.

Supervision has been studied extensively for almost five decades (Pajak, 2000). Vision has been a more recent focus of the educational literature, but much has been written about its importance. Supervision and vision should be linked if the practice of supervision is tied to the philosophy of the school district within which it is practiced. It seemed productive and timely to connect, through research, the two entities of vision and supervision. Researchers need to begin to have some understanding of how vision is operationalized in schools and school districts.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between the expressed vision and mission of a selected school district and the practices it has undertaken in the area of instructional supervision in two schools. To elucidate the purpose of the study, several research questions were addressed.

1. What is the expressed vision of the system?
2. What are individuals' perceptions of the vision?
3. What is the expressed supervisory policy of the system?
4. What is the relationship between the policy and system vision?
5. How is the supervisory policy of the system operationalized?

6. What are the experiences of individuals with the supervisory activity of the system?
7. How are these supervisory experiences related to the vision of the system?

Significance of the Study

This study has significance for *policy*, *practice*, *theory*, and *further research*. It examined the concept of vision and attempted to give it a practical and workable description. The study helped to draw a clearer link between policy-in-intention and policy-in-experience (Guba, 1984) in the areas of instructional supervision and leadership.

Policy

This study had implications in the area of policy development. The conceptual framework for the study was an adaptation of Guba's (1984) model of policy definition and analysis. Guba identified policy-in-intention, policy-in-action, and policy-in-experience as policy types, and he suggested goals or intents as one of the definitions of policy. This study sought to relate vision, which was accepted as meta-policy guiding the formulation of policy-in-intention, to actual practices in teacher supervision, which could be seen as policy-in-experience. The supervisory practices of a school district were examined and related to the policy framework for supervision that had been created in the school district. Vision was viewed as the goals or intents that were the foundation of policy development.

Through this study, the significance of the effect of vision on policy and the relationship to experience was examined. One important implication of the study is that it could influence the development of well-informed policy on teacher supervision both in

the school district studied and in other jurisdictions seeking to enhance their own policy o on supervision.

Practice

Examining the instructional and supervisory practices of a school district was an important part of the study. The literature indicated that supervision of instruction is becoming more collaborative and related to supervision within a community of learners (Pajak, 2000). In the examination of the work of a school district that was identified as exemplary in the area of instructional supervision, were the latest trends in the theory and literature reflected in practice? Whether the latest trends were found or not, this study should contribute significantly to the praxis of instructional supervision.

The significance of examining current practice cannot be overestimated. The examination of the match between the vision of the district and current practice provides new, and perhaps clearer, premises and structures for reflection and changes in the day-to-day operations of schools. This practical and workable description for the concept of vision gives the study importance for practitioners in the field. If vision was (or can be) directly driving practice, it places importance on the visioning processes of a school district and the commitment to the vision which is generated.

Theory

By studying the link between supervision and vision, some conclusions can be drawn about the tie between supervision and professional learning communities that could help to clarify maps to improve learning. If it has been shown that professional learning communities have enhanced the outcomes for students, as DuFour and Eaker (1998) argued, and in studying the connection to collaborative supervision processes

within professional learning communities, then the link between vision, supervision, and student learning is closer to discovery. The literature pointed to vision as an important part of a professional learning community. Thus, if supervisory practices focused on improved learning and teaching were (or can be) driven by the vision, it seems logical to examine the relationship between and among these entities.

The ability to identify a link between a compelling vision and the day-to-day practice of a school district was an important outgrowth of the study. This link has importance for theory development in the field of educational administration and leadership development.

Further Research

This study has implications for further research. One focus for this further research could be in the area of vision development. This study examined vision as it existed in a selected school district but it did not address the process of developing a clear and compelling vision, although one of the interviewees shed light on the process from her perspective as Board Chair.

Another topic for further study is the relationship between supervision and evaluation. This study studied at supervisory practices, but sometimes the terms supervision and evaluation were used interchangeably in the literature. In the district studied, the terms seemed to be used interchangeably and the term “appraisal” was used more than either supervision or evaluation. The literature identified a significant challenge in the separation of supervision and evaluation processes (Gleave, 1997; Greene, 1992; Zepeda, 2002; Zepeda & Ponticell, 1998), but the study was limited in its scope to examine this issue.

The terminology related to supervision needs to be examined. The word "supervision" often has implications that are not positive. It tends to imply a superordinate/subordinate relationship. The more collaborative nature of the process described in the literature (Pajak, 2000) causes the traditional language to come under question. The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development at one point considered changing its name to remove the word supervision (Holland and Garman, 2001). The negative connotation of the name for the process has been noted in the literature (Glickman et al., 2001; Holland & Garman, 2001) but no reasonable alternative to the present terminology has yet come into common use. Maybe "performance appraisal" as used commonly in the district studied and elsewhere in Eastern Canada is a term for consideration, although I am not advocating that. If different language could be identified and become widely accepted, it could affect the nature of the process.

The Researcher

My experience as an administrator/instructional supervisor, has spanned 28 years and has included eight years as a principal in four schools and 20 years as a director of education with three school boards. I believe I was able to recognize certain complex situations while collecting data and this experience provided a lens for analysis in a variety of situations and helped guide interactions during the data collection process. This experience in supervision and working with teachers and principals provided background that proved important when in the schools. I truly enjoyed my work with the principals, whom I grew to know and respect.

I have a BA (History) from the University of Waterloo, a BEd (Elementary) from Laurentian University, and a PGD, and MEd (Educational Administration) from the

University of Saskatchewan. I have taught all subjects from grades five to nine, grades two to twelve social studies, and kindergarten, grade one, and grade two physical education. I also taught Educational Administration for the University of Regina.

My experiences can be seen as both a strength and a weakness when conducting research. I was well known in the province of Saskatchewan so there was a familiarity factor with the school divisions in Saskatchewan that would have been challenging to mitigate. For that reason and others, the study was conducted in Eastern Canada where I had recently relocated. In fact, when I conducted the research in the schools, recognition did not seem to be an issue and this anonymity helped to remove the challenge of my positional authority impacting on the results. I believe the participants were open and honest and treated me with respect.

The reputational nature of the nomination process was a positive factor with the principals and the board office personnel in the success of the research. The fact that the school district was being studied as an "exemplary" school district with regard to supervision practices seemed to ease the anxiety of the participants.

Limitations

For the purposes of this study, the following limitations are recognized.

1. The collection of data, through both interviews and observations, may have been affected by the positional authority of the researcher.
2. The time constraints of my position limited my data collection to certain defined periods of time.

Delimitations

The study operated under the following delimitations.

1. This study took place in a regional school board in a province in Eastern Canada.
2. The study was conducted during the period of March to June, 2006.
3. Primary sources of data were interviews, document analysis, and observations with accompanying field notes.
4. The data for the study reflected the perceptions of senior administrators, the board chair, principals, and teachers.
5. The focus of the study was supervisory practice as opposed to evaluation of teaching performance.
6. The observations were focused on supervisory interactions as defined and identified by the principals.

Definitions

For the purposes of this study, the following definitions were used.

1. Instructional supervision: The developmental process of instructional improvement (Glickman et al., 2001) inextricably linked to staff development (Wanzare & Da Costa, 2000). Supervisory leadership for the 21st century requires an emerging set of skills: enhanced collaborative relationships, participatory decision-making, reflective listening and practice, and teacher self-direction (Sullivan & Glanz, 2000).
2. Vision: Shared pictures of the future (Senge, 1990) and the criterion against which all behaviour within an organization is measured (Belasco & Stayer, 1993) growing from the collective views of a variety of sources (Fullan, 1997).

3. Regional school board: The Governor in Council may establish a regional school board to administer the public schools in a school region (Provincial Ed. Act, s. 7 (2)).

Assumptions

The following are assumptions that have influenced the study.

1. Vision can operate as meta-policy in an organization.
2. For the purposes of this study, the terms “mission”, “mission/vision”, and “vision” were used interchangeably.
3. There is no one reality and people construct their own meaning and reality based on their perceptions of the world.

Organization of the Thesis

In this chapter, I addressed the problem. In Chapter 2, I reviewed literature on instructional supervision and vision. I introduced the conceptual framework. In Chapter 3, I outlined the ontology, epistemology, and methodology that guided the research. In Chapter 4, I described the setting and presented the findings from the research. In Chapter 5, I provided a discussion of the theoretical and practical dimensions of the findings in relation to the literature and then I suggested a model for implementation to address the link between vision and action. I introduced implications for leadership action on policy, practice, theory and further research.

CHAPTER 2

A REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter is to review related literature on the significance of vision in education and teacher supervision. I organized it in such a manner that the literature on *Vision* is introduced first and then the *Relationship between Vision and Supervision* is highlighted. To encapsulate the literature on teacher supervision, Pajak's (2000) framework on the development in this field provided a valuable and useful *Historical Perspective on Teacher Supervision: A Frame for Analysis.* This framework has been offered as a means of summarizing theoretical development in supervision from the 1950s to the mid 1990s. Pajak's "families" of supervision serve as a guide for understanding the changes that have characterized the literature over the past 50 years.

I structured the next portion of the review by building on the categories suggested by Pajak and highlighting *Current Trends and Models of Supervision*. The final section of the literature review will focus attention on *Continuing Supervisory Issues and Debates*. I introduced the *Conceptual Framework* for this study through pertinent studies by Tunison (2001) and Bosetti (1994), and then developed it based on the policy definition work of Guba (1984) and Downey (1988).

Vision

Many authors believe in the power of vision. Barker (1991) stated the view that the vision of organizations has been found to have a profound impact on their activities and their success. Vision, shared by members of an organization, helps people to set goals to advance the organization and is an important key for motivation and empowerment (Nauheimer, 2003). Belasco and Stayer (1993) stated that vision is the

criterion against which all behaviour within an organization is measured. They also said: "Vision focuses. Vision inspires. Without a vision, the people perish" (p. 90). This is strong language, but it does help to emphasize the importance of vision. Long term, successful organizations stand for something and seem to aspire to a greater purpose. The work of Peter Senge (1990) is helpful in addressing the concept of shared vision. Senge noted, "A shared vision, especially one that is intrinsic, uplifts people's aspirations. Work becomes part of pursuing a larger purpose" (p. 207). He said that the style, climate, and spirit of the organization can embody the larger purpose. Senge (1990) described vision as unearthing shared pictures of the future that foster genuine commitment and enrolment rather than compliance. Senge distinguished "enrolment" from "compliance" by defining the former as internal motivation and the latter as external and related to rules and procedures. A shared vision changes people's relationship with the organization, moving it from "theirs" to "ours" (Senge, 1990, p. 206).

Fullan (1997) noted that the vital role of vision appears in every book on educational and organizational success. He cautioned that it is not an easy concept with which to work, and to avoid short cuts and premature visions that have no depth or communal meaning. "An organization, to be effective, needs both a vision of the nature and content that it represents, and the processes it characteristically values and follows" (p. 34). Fullan stated that vision must not be confined to a privileged few, but must grow from the collective views of a variety of sources.

Scoolis (1998) noted that the terms "vision" and "mission" are often used interchangeably. It is sometimes difficult to recognize differences in how the terms are used. Scoolis argued that mission is abstract while vision is concrete. For example, he

said that a mission is "providing an education for the 21st century" while a vision is "involving students in active, project-based learning activities" (p. 21). There are other interpretations of these terms. McDonough and Noonan (1994) called developing a mission statement "grassroots policy development guided by purpose and developed for consensus-building" (p. 13). An effective vision is seldom created in a vacuum by an organizational leader (Scoolis, 1998).

Barth and Pansegrau seemed to use the terms vision and mission interchangeably. They said, "The world these days is saying that every school should have a vision or mission statement" (Barth & Pansegrau, 1994, p. 2). They indirectly defined an organization's vision or mission as "a sense of where it wants to go" (p. 3). Barth and Pansegrau believed that a vision should be "written in pencil" and should be adjusted over time, but also said, "You need to couple moral outrage with a vision," (p. 9) so that people drive toward its actualization. Peel and McGary (1997) stated that a vision in a school system only has power for those who can see it. They postulated that a vision cannot be created in isolation and must be continuously communicated by the leaders of the organization. "The vision must become part of the belief system of individuals and play itself out in their behaviour" (Peel & McGary, 1997, p. 698).

At the school level, Ripley (1994) discussed the principal's role in implementing vision in a school. His thesis was that the principal is the "high priest" (p. 15) of the school and the one who most influences the values and beliefs that make the school unique. The principal's vision, then, is part of the "curriculum" (p. 16) that determines the culture of the school. "A good principal's 'curriculum' allows unity without conformity, symmetry without sameness, and diversity without divisiveness" (p. 18).

The argument was made that good schools have embodied in the staff a sense of passion for a course of action that will move the school toward the fulfillment of its mission and vision.

Rideout, McKay, and Morton (2004), in a study on effective school visioning process, found that a system's inputs, outputs, and functions define its purpose more clearly that its stated vision and goals. Their hypothesis was that "visioning strategy" (p. 71) could be the link between the leader and the functioning of the organization, and was important for a leadership strategy. Rideout et al. suggested a "Leadership Strategy" (p. 71) with eight dimensions: (a) learning orientation, (b) self knowledge, (c) values foundation, (d) vision, an ability to see beyond what is to what could be-a strong sense of purpose, (e) values building, (f) vision bridging, a commitment to unite the organization under a shared view of the future, (g) empowerment, and (h) organizational sensitivity. Rideout et al. discovered that, in establishing school vision principals and in-school educational professionals play a dominant role; parents and students play a considerably smaller role than administrators and educational professionals; all stakeholder groups play a larger role in medium sized schools than in small or large schools; and parents, students, and principals are more likely to be involved in medium-sized schools (p. 80). Their conclusions were that visioning strategy appears to be controlled by in-school professional educators, specifically principals, and that principals view visioning as an event and not an ongoing process. Comments quoted such as, "We did ours five years ago" (p. 81) were indicative of this belief.

Certain leadership characteristics are important if visioning is to be tied to school effectiveness. Leithwood et al. (1999) focused on the setting of direction by leadership

through building a shared vision, developing consensus about goals, and creating high performance expectations. It was identified that a vision or mission statement would have no impact unless there was commitment to it by those affected by it.

Leithwood et al. concentrated on how such commitment could be created. They found that leaders who helped the organization to identify and articulate a vision may not have been attributed with charisma by colleagues, but they helped to identify new opportunities for the organization. Nanus (as cited in Leithwood et al., 1999) dedicated his 1992 book *Visionary Leadership* to the concept that the most valuable engine in the organization was the leader who could lead it to excellence through a compelling, worthwhile, widely shared, and achievable vision of the future.

Leithwood et al. listed eight research-based, identifiable leadership behaviours associated with vision building. They are as follows: (a) helping colleagues find uniting purpose, (b) engaging staff in vision development, (c) providing the framework of vision that included others' views, (d) helping colleagues see the result of working together to change practices, (e) tying vision to practical implications for program and instruction, (f) making the link between external initiatives for school change and vision, (g) assisting in building understanding of larger implications of the vision, and (h) communicating the vision to stakeholders and the community at every opportunity.

Leiberman (1995) studied schools where a shared vision was created through a "bottom-up" (p. 7) authentic process. This process built support, over time, engaging staff in discussion, supporting a vision, and then acting on that vision and inventing ways to make it a reality. Substantial change and instructional innovation, leading to improved learning, took place in these schools with a broadly-shared vision. Albrecht (1994), on

the other hand, spoke of the power of leaders who articulate a vision and enroll others in that vision. He said a leader must not only have a vision, but it must be clear, valid, and compelling.

Lambert (2003) referred to shared vision at both the district and school levels. She stated that, at the district level, a shared vision "…is the touchstone from which other district actions flow" (p. 86). Lambert discussed the consistency of behaviour with vision. Questions were asked such as: "Will the program being considered enable you to implement your vision" (p. 86)? At the school level, commitment to a shared vision provides coherence to programs and learning practices. "Without coherence, wonderful classrooms operate next door to poor ones, and pioneering instructional practices are under the same roof as ones that were long ago discredited" (p. 6).

In a book on transforming schools, Zmuda, Kuklis, and Kline (2004) highlighted the importance of a shared vision, but went on to identify the concept of "collective autonomy" (p. 61). This was defined as a staff that agreed to collaborate to pursue shared goals. "To move from individual autonomy to collective autonomy, stakeholders must engage in collegial conversations about the school, its purpose, its beliefs, and its problems" (Zmuda et al., 2004, p. 61).

DuFour and Eaker (1998) identified mission and vision as the foundation of the school as a learning community. They said, "…vision instills an organization with a sense of direction" (p, 62). "An effective vision statement articulates a vivid picture of the organization's future that is so compelling that a school's members were motivated to work together to make it a reality" (p, 62).

In a discussion of visionary leadership, Sashkin (1995) identified three characteristics of visionary leadership. One consisted of creating an ideal vision of the organization and its culture; another was defining an organizational philosophy that succinctly states the vision and developing programs and policies that put the philosophy into practice within the organization's unique culture and context. The third characteristic was the leader's personal practices on a one-to-one basis in order to create and support the vision. Harris (2002) supported the idea of visionary leadership for instructional improvement. "The articulation, development and implementation of 'vision' is particularly important in capacity-building for improvement" (p. 73).

Rozycki (2004) struck a cautionary note on mission and vision on the educational scene. He suggested, "…they must be tempered with a sense of proportion, a knowledge of the resources available, and a cool evaluation of the likelihood of success" (p. 95). Rozycki called vision statements "happy talk" which he said was "sweet slogans that enervate clear definition of goals, that obscure inquiry into their achievability" (p. 94). Rozycki suggested a need for critical questions and criteria questions to challenge mission and vision statements. Critical questions were defined as challenging the causal relationships inherent in a vision statement and criteria questions asked how definitions were created for items mentioned in a vision statement (Rozycki, 2004).

Successful organizations have a positive and inspiring vision (Barker, 1991). The power of vision should inspire every employee to contribute and support the direction of the organization. Barker cited a longitudinal study by Collins and Porras that identified that corporations with vision outperformed other corporations from 1926 to 1990 by nine

times the return on investment and the general market by 15 times (J.A. Barker, personal communication, April 26, 2001).

An argument could be made that a vision constitutes a form of meta-policy (Downey, 1988), guiding policy development in all areas. According to Downey (1988), meta-policy can help address some persistent problems at the local governance level, such as lack of continuity and perceived inconsistency of board direction.

Relationship between Vision and Supervision

How is vision related to teacher supervision? Glickman et al. (2001) introduced the term "SuperVision" (p. 8) and defined it as: "a common vision of what teaching and learning can and should be, developed collaboratively by supervisors, teachers, and other members of the school community." Coens and Jenkins (2000) discussed the concept of having a clear vision in an organization about effective personnel support practices and seeking the appropriate feedback to be an effective employee. The limited literature in this area seems to indicate that a clear direction is important and there must be a high level of commitment to the supervision process for it to be successful.

Lambert (2003) discussed the need for coherence of educational practices with the vision of a school district. All things adults are doing and students are learning should be consistent with the vision. This statement implies the question: is supervision of instruction, the way it is manifested in our district, consistent with our vision?

Historical Perspective on Teacher Supervision: A Frame for Analysis

Pajak (2000) identified four "families" of teacher supervision (see figure 1), namely Original Clinical Models, Humanistic/Artistic Models, Technical/Didactic Models, and Developmental/Reflective Models. These models are described in turn below.

Family	Approximate Years of Emergence	Major Principles
Original Clinical Models Goldhammer Mosher and Purpel Cogan	1960s to early 1970s	Collegiality and mutual discovery of meaning
Humanistic/Artistic Models Blumberg Eisner	mid 1970s to early 1980s	Positive and productive interpersonal relations with holistic understanding of classroom events
Technical/Didactic Models Acheson & Gall Hunter Joyce & Showers	early to mid-1980s	Effective teaching strategies, technique, and organizational expectations
Developmental/Reflective Models Glickman Costa & Garmston Schon Zeichner & Liston Garman Smyth and Retallick Bowers and Flinders Waite	mid-1980s to mid-1990s	Teacher cognitive development, introspection, and discovery of context-specific principles of practice

Figure 1. Pajak's historical perspective on supervision (Pajak, 2000, p. 7)

Original Clinical Models

Pajak summarized the work of Goldhammer, Mosher and Purpel, and Cogan as the “Original Clinical Models” (p 6). He stated, “The writings of Robert Goldhammer, Ralph Mosher and David Purpel, and Morris Cogan, when considered separately or collectively, reflect what seems to be a curious blending of empiricism, phenomenology, behaviouralism, developmentalism and technique” (p. 6). Pajak further stated that the principles associated with these views were collegiality and mutual discovery of meaning, which were based on contemporary psychological theory from the late 1950s, 1960s, and early 1970s.

Humanistic/Artistic Models

The work of Arthur Blumberg and Elliott Eisner was characterized by Pajak as the "Humanistic/Artistic Models" (p. 7) of supervision. These writings from the mid 1970s and early 1980s were described as almost existential in orientation and were seen as grounded in the idea that the relationship between the supervisor and supervisee was of primary importance (Pajak, 2000). Eisner believed that the application of empirical procedures in supervision could threaten what he believed were the vital elements of intuition, artistry, and idiosyncrasy. Eisner also believed in helping teachers understand the artistry of their teaching through rich descriptions and intuitive interpretations of classroom experiences.

Technical/Didactic Models

Pajak identified the "Technical/Didactic Models" (p. 8) that he associated with the work of Acheson, Gall, Hunter, and Joyce and Showers. These processes contrast with the humanistic/artistic processes that preceded them. Technical/didactic approaches emphasize step-by-step procedures and the use of classroom observation as a source of feedback to reinforce predetermined models of teaching, or coaching teachers on the proper implementation of teaching strategies that have been identified by researchers as being effective (Pajak, 2000).

Developmental/Reflective Models

The fourth "family" of supervision discussed by Pajak consisted of the "Developmental/Reflective Models" (p. 8). He identified Glickman, Costa and Garmston, Schon, Zeichner and Liston, Garman, Smyth and Retallick, Bowers and Flinders, and Waite as writers who were part of this "family" and who were particularly

influential in the late 1980s and the 1990s. These authors described supervisors influencing the thinking processes and sensitivities of teachers in order to help them improve (Pajak, 2000). They tended to be advocates of the phenomenological perspective, helping teachers understand their own practice and motivations within the context of their own classrooms.

Other Historical Perspectives

Reitzug (1997) conducted an extensive review of textbooks used in the training of principals between 1985 and 1995. "The analysis yielded images that portrayed the principal as expert and superior, the teacher as deficient and voiceless, teaching as fixed technology, and supervision as discrete intervention" (p. 325). Reitzug believed that, given recent research, more empowering images should be constructed that portray teachers and principals as collaborative inquirers, teaching as problematic, and professional development (supervision) as sustained and ongoing. Reitzug concluded that educators must consider questions that probe historical and ideological influences on schooling and the practices they engender.

Referring to earlier perspectives, Duffy (1998) noted that four periods of American instructional supervision have been identified. These eras were: the period of administrative inspection (1642-1875), the period of efficiency orientation (1876-1936), the period of cooperative group effort (1937-1959), and the period of research orientation (1960-present). For the purposes of this paper, the time period of the literature that is reviewed is almost exclusively within the period of research orientation, as identified by Duffy.

Current Trends and Models of Supervision

Building on the historical perspective of Pajak, there are some significant influences on the current practice of supervision that have roots in the literature. In this section of the paper, I will examine models that have had, and are still having, significant effect on the current practice of supervision, as well as studies that have been conducted to support theory development.

Differentiated/Contingency Models

Teacher supervision was described as the developmental process of teacher improvement (Glickman et al., 2001). Glickman (1981) and Glickman et al. (2001) suggested that supervision should be conducted according to the level of abstraction and the level of commitment of the teacher involved (see Figure 2). Abstraction was defined as the ability to think through how a strategy or plan might work in a classroom while commitment was defined as high concern for the profession, evidenced by willingness to spend extra time and energy to help students and other teachers (Glickman, 1981). A number of research efforts have supported Glickman's theory and model of supervision.

Ralph (2000) conducted a study of "supervision in context" in which supervisory style was matched to supervisee readiness. Ralph's study showed that when there was a match between supervisor style and supervisee placement on a developmental grid, teacher skill development was enhanced. The research of Siens and Ebmeier (1996) compared the developmental supervision process to a more traditional, purely clinical model. Siens and Ebmeier found that developmental supervision substantially enhanced the reflective thinking skills of teachers. There was also some evidence that when

teachers set their own direction for instructional change through a reflective process there was more commitment to change and follow-through.

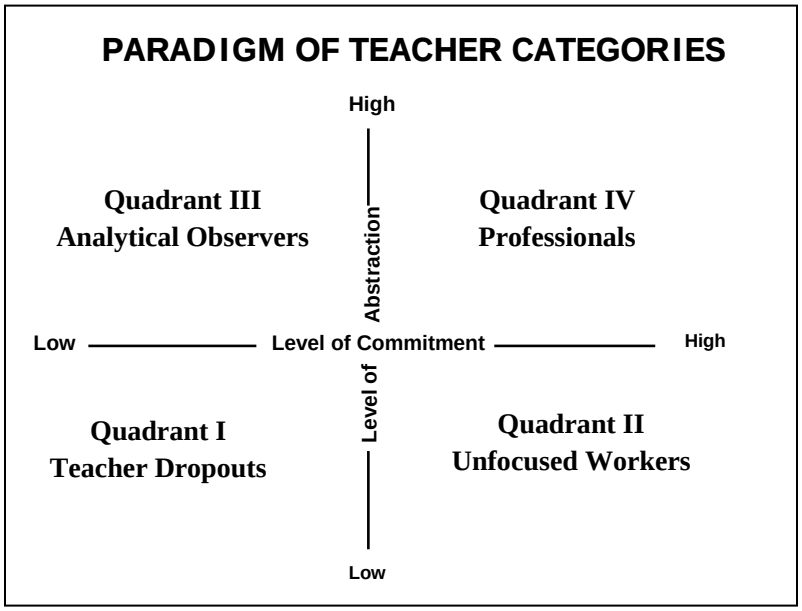

Figure 2. Glickman's paradigm of teacher categories (Glickman, 1981, p. 48).

In a study across a number of schools in several states, Ebmeier and Nicklaus (1999) examined the effect of developmental supervision on five "teacher affective variables" (commitment to teaching, commitment to school, trust in administration, trust in teachers, and desire for collaboration) and two "personal decision variables" (efficacy expectations and outcome expectations; p. 351). Statistically positive results were yielded on all dependent measures when developmental supervision was implemented by principals. Implementation by teachers yielded statistically positive effects for the collaboration and commitment to teaching scales. This study suggested that collaborative supervision could play a major role in increasing teachers' commitment, collaboration, efficacy, and trust (p. 378).

Barager (2000) argued that developmental supervision was an important tool in teacher motivation. Her thesis was that developmental supervison, implemented by a principal as a discovery process, would be a strong motivator for teachers. Barager linked developmental supervision to transformational leadership, noting that "developmental supervision is the process by which an individual, usually the principal, helps teachers become more proficient with their tasks" (p. 47). It referred to all the tasks undertaken to improve teacher performance. Barager stated that although the principal is the catylist for motivation, teacher involvement in all facets of the school, including supervision, is important.

Hurley, Greenblatt, and Cooper (2003) stressed the need for "learning conversations", based on the *cognitive neuroscience* research of Sylwester and Costa and Garmston, among others, to transform supervision into a professional learning process. In an overview of the literature on supervision and staff development, Wanzare and Da Costa (2000) concluded that supervision and staff development are inextricably linked and that supervision is an important vehicle for staff development.

Glatthorn (1990), like Glickman (1981), looked at a differentiated model of teacher supervision. Glatthorn proposed a self-directed approach where teachers were substantially engaged in setting the direction of their own supervisory process. He defined self-directed supervision as a process wherein teachers direct their own professional growth (Glatthorn, 1990, p. 149). To enhance the learning of teachers, Glatthorn believed there must be significant commitment to the supervision process by those involved. He said that when there is effective supervision of instruction, administrators, team leaders, and teachers cooperate in providing supervisory services

that result in frequent feedback to teachers, that focus on instructional improvement, that emphasize student achievement, and that foster collaboration and cooperation (Glatthorn, 1990).

Rettig (1999) examined a case study of a school system that moved to a differentiated model of supervision. He argued that by implementing a differentiated model, the district made major strides in ameliorating the traditional shortcomings of teacher supervision and evaluation. "With the flexibility of the differentiated supervision, teachers and administrators are beginning to work together for professional development and teachers are working together more as colleagues and professionals" (p. 39).

Collaborative Models

Good and Brophy (1987) noted that classrooms are active places and teachers are so busy responding that they have little time to think deeply about what they are doing. They stated: "Teachers are seldom observed on any systematic basis. Consequently, they seldom get valuable information about ways to increase their effectiveness, and when they are observed it is typically for purposes of evaluation" (p. 50). Good and Brophy suggested that observation in classrooms can help to address some of these issues through the development of language to identify specific classroom behaviours and practices. They felt that peer observation and collaborative practices were underutilized as mechanisms to enhance the instructional process.

Sullivan and Glanz (2000) stated that supervisory leadership for the 21st century would require a different set of skills: enhanced collaborative relationships, participatory decision-making, reflective listening and practice, and teacher self-direction- all of which

emanate from the constructivist paradigm. Sullivan and Glanz studied five cases of alternative approaches to supervision: mentoring, peer coaching, portfolios for differentiated supervision, peer assessment (selection, support and evaluation), and action research. Two major conclusions for the direction of supervision in the future emerged from this research effort: (a) it will emphasize a democratic conception of supervision based on collaboration, participatory decision-making, and reflective practice, and (b) it will require visionary leaders, who promote these beliefs and values and who work with their teachers to construct a supervisory program that will improve teaching and learning (Sullivan & Glanz, 2000).

The work of Joyce and Showers (1988) indicated the importance of coaching in the classroom for the implementation of change. Their writing on "transfer" of changes or implementation of new instructional strategies into teaching practice emphasized the benefits of instructional supervision or coaching. "Coached teachers generally practice new strategies more frequently and develop greater skill in the actual moves of a new teaching strategy than do teachers who have experienced identical initial training" (Joyce & Showers, 1988, p. 88). They stressed the importance of classroom coaching visitations. The relationship between coaching and supervision depends on the nature of relationships and power differentials in the school district. In many districts the imbalance of power is maintained by combining the processes of instructional supervision and evaluation. Decision making often stays in the hands of superiors while teachers are the recipients of the process. Joyce and Showers (1988) found that supervision is not incompatible with staff development, but that there must be separation of supervision and evaluation and amelioration of power and status differentials.

Showers and Joyce (1996) re-examined the peer coaching process and found that the transfer of change into classroom practices was still positively affected by classroom-based coaching activities. "Time to both preservice and inservice teachers to observe each other work, analyze their teaching, and plan together the best choices of content and process for specific instructional objectives must be structured into the workplace" (Joyce & Showers, 1988, p. 77).

Perkins's (1998) study of training peer coaches indicated that there may have been significant difficulty in getting the coaches to perform the expected skills. Data indicated that the coaches performed the coaching skills to a lesser extent as the cycles ensued and reverted to evaluative comments and typical patterns of discussion and questioning as the study progressed.

Costa and Garmston (1994) argued that the only lasting change in teaching practice comes from within, and to unlock a teacher's ability to examine his or her teaching is the primary purpose of a coach/supervisor. Therefore, the effort of a supervisor should be focused on supporting the teacher, in a systematic manner, to think through the process of planning, delivering, and assessing the instructional process (Costa & Garmston, 1994). This work was supported by Glanz (2005) when he said, "Good principals continually engage teachers in instructional dialogue and reflective practices so they are best equipped to improve the academic performance of all their students" (p. 17). However, the work of Costa and Garmston was called into question by Perkins's (1998) study, because training in the coaching process did not change behaviour of coaches in the long term.

Cook (1996) advocated the promotion of inquiry in supervision through examinations of Gardner's Multiple Intelligence (MI) Theory and Martinello and Cook's work on habits of mind. "Sophistication in the use of clinical supervision, MI Theory, and habits of mind comes from long-term professional development programs that have allowed the supervisor and teacher to gradually develop their expertise" (Cook, 1996, p. 47). The idea was that, "Models of thinking can provide a framework within which reflection can be coherent, productive and growth enhancing" (Cook, 1996, p. 48).

Goldstein and Noguero (2006) studied and advocated for a process called "peer assistance and review" that they said enhanced the skills of teachers. Bushman (2006) argued for a peer focused "walk-through" (p. 58) program that he said made supervision more thoughtful and meaningful. In a study of peer supervision through autobiography, Ike (1996) found the process was a good learning experience for teachers, but was perceived as cumbersome and time consuming. While a significant percentage of the participants found the process useful, a lower percentage thought it should be made mandatory.

In a study of peer supervision through a formal program, Wallace (1998) found that collegiality and professional growth were not automatic outcomes of a peer supervision program. Wallace concluded that these types of programs could become ritualistic and not focused on teacher skill enhancement, if strong curriculum leadership were not in place. Koehler (1996) stated that that collegial supervision programs will not succeed without collegial planning. He recommended choosing one or two areas for professional development, which are to be collaboratively determined, then linking those

areas to collegial observations and administrative evaluation. Koehler said that without all these components working together, peer collaboration would not work.

A number of studies have examined peer or collaborative supervision as an effective type of supervisory or classroom coaching activity (Dell'olio, 1998; Gleave, 1997; Greene, 1992; Hyun & Marshall, 1996; McBride & Skau, 1995; Munson, 1998; Wallace, 1998; Zepeda, 2002; Zepeda & Ponticell, 1998). All of these studies found positive correlation between collaborative supervisory practices and some aspect of teaching or learning success. This amount of research with similar conclusions offers strong support for collaborative supervisory practice.

Dell'olio (1998), Hyun & Marshall (1996), and McBride & Skau (1995), examined the value of reflective practice, and all three studies found positive relationships between reflective practice and professional learning. They also showed that there was increased ability to practice the required tasks of professional educators.

A case study of teacher evaluation and supervision at a high performing urban elementary school found that four themes emerged from the data that were perceived to have the greatest impact at the school site on student achievement (Hillyer, 2005). These four themes were staff collaboration, high quality leadership, professional development, and an emphasis on student achievement. Varley (2005) drew the link between principal leadership, collaborative supervision, and student achievement. She said, "By being visible in classrooms via informal and formal observations, the instructional leader can improve teaching and learning through supervision" (p. 15). Florence (2005) added, "Collaborative supervision also enables teachers to evaluate their own instructional effectiveness and to solve instructional problems" (p. 17). She also stated that:

> A significant body of research suggests that teacher quality can positively impact student learning and teacher supervision programs can improve teacher quality. These teacher supervision programs are collaborative and emphasize formative over summative feedback. (p. 167)

A number of studies have produced results that have shown a strong link between instructional supervision and the learning of students. This potential link makes the process of supervision critical in schools.

Interdependent Models

Fullan (2001) and Hargreaves (2003) emphasized the need for collaborative cultures in schools. Fullan advocated for such a culture by noting that many corporations (and the U.S. Army) are espousing that high quality relationships and collaboration are vital to their success (p. 82). Hargreaves (2003) admonished schools to get past "contrived" collegiality and move to true collaboration. At best, when true collaboration was achieved, "…collaborative efforts focused on ways to improve teaching and learning, the effects on students' achievement and school improvement were strong" (Hargreaves, 2003, p. 165). The goal of collaboration, for Hargreaves, was to create a professional learning community. Professional learning communities put a premium on teachers working together, but they also insisted that this joint work consistently focus on teaching and learning and used evidence and data as a basis for improving classroom instruction and informing school improvement discussions (Hargreaves, 2003).

DuFour (2004) and DuFour and Eaker (1998) advocated a culture of collaboration within a professional learning community, but said, "Despite compelling evidence indicating that working collaboratively represents best practice, teachers in many schools continue to work in isolation. Even in schools that endorse the idea of collaboration, the staff's willingness to collaborate stops at the classroom door" (DuFour, 2004, p. 9).

Professional learning communities are characterized by powerful collaboration through a systemic process in which teachers work together to analyze and improve their classroom practice (DuFour 2004; DuFour & Eaker, 1998).

Teachers, as has been noted, often work alone in their classrooms but are part of an educational community at the school level (Senge, 1990; Joyce & Showers, 1987). Smith (2003) cited Lave & Wenger, who discussed creating a "community of practice" (pp. 73-84). They described a community of practice as a joint enterprise, a mutual engagement, which will generate an appropriate shared repertoire of ideas, commitments, and memories. A community of practice also needs to develop various resources such as tools, documents, routines, vocabularies, and symbols that carry accumulated knowledge of the community (Lave & Wenger, 1999; Wenger, 1999; Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, 2002).

Sackney and Mitchell (2002) made the case that teaching and learning are at the heart of leadership. They elaborated further when they said, "Leading is not about telling others what to do but rather about opening spaces for people to learn about what matters to them" (p. 909). This philosophy of leadership and learning helped Sackney and Mitchell to conclude that schools can be communities of learners and possibly even communities of leaders. A community of learners was described as a group working in an environment that is nurturing, supportive, understanding, and challenging while sharing a mutual understanding and commitment to its own development and the development of children (Senge, 2000).

DuFour (1997; 2004) said that in schools that function as learning communities, teachers are guided by a shared purpose and take collective responsibility for student

learning. Sergiovanni (1991), in what seemed to be a shift in his thinking, said, that despite good intention, most teachers perceive supervision as a nonevent, a ritual that they participate in according to well-established scripts. To address this issue, Sergiovanni said the metaphor for schooling must be changed to that of a community of learners.

Glickman's (1981) work on teacher development variables: level of commitment and level of abstraction, is consistent with theory on developing a community of learners. When teachers have attained a high level of commitment and abstraction, they are said to be in quadrant IV of Glickman's paradigm and are known as "professionals" (p. 48). Teachers who appear to fit into this category are ready to assume ownership of their own supervisory process, and, therefore have an opportunity for creativity and individuality. Working together as a community of learners provides teachers from varied teaching backgrounds with options for growth within a supportive group of colleagues who can nurture and support each other's growth.

After his review of the literature on teacher supervision, Pajak (2000) identified that the current trends in the literature support supervision within a "Learning Community". He stated that the needs of schools are changing because of the nature of the clientele; many students are coming to school today that, "…are alienated, chemically dependent, physically/emotionally/sexually abused, pregnant, hungry, malnourished, diseased, poor, homeless, or often violent" (p. 9). The other big change he noted was the "challenge posed by a technically sophisticated global economy" (p. 9). "The challenge facing educators…into the new millennium is how to facilitate collective learning in classrooms and schools so that new knowledge and creative innovations are generated

and internalized, thus enabling schools to better meet the needs of students and adapt to the demands of a diverse and rapidly changing environment" (p. 11). In a school that operates as a learning community, teachers engage in peer coaching and visit each other's classrooms often in order to help improve instruction. The emphasis is on generating data and engaging in conversations with colleagues about teaching and learning to develop a store of professional knowledge through instructionally focused action research (Pajak, 2000).

Duffy (2000, 1997) argued that the way to transform teaching and learning throughout a school district is to transform that system into a high-performing community of learners. He argued for Knowledge Work Supervision (KWS) as a new and different approach to instructional supervision. The underlying philosophy behind this approach was a shift from the belief that changing individual behaviour improves the entire organization to the belief that changing the entire organization improves individual behaviour (Duffy, 2000).

Duffy (2000) suggested assessing and simultaneously improving the district's environmental relationships, the knowledge work processes, and the social architecture, including organization design, motivation, job satisfaction, and job skills (p. 130). The core suggested methods of KWS were the *Search Conference Method* developed by Emery and Emery, *Participative Design Workshops*, also developed by the Emerys, and *Open Space Technology* from the work of Owen (Duffy, 2000, p. 142). The suggestion by Duffy that the entire school system should be addressed as a K-12 context for learning agreed with the theorists who proposed a community of learners or a community of practice as an organizational construct for improvement and supervision.

Claudet and Elliett (1999) looked at schools as learning communities and attempted to find a relationship between organizational/supervisory climate and criteria linked to school effectiveness. While they did not identify that supervision was directly linked to student achievement, they tested a model of school supervision as an organizational rather than a research phenomenon. They suggested that differential linkages between school climate elements and various school effectiveness indices may be mediated by a variety of school construct variables. Further research was suggested to define these relationships more definitively (Claudet & Elliett, 1999).

Continuing Supervisory Issues and Debates

Certain issues and debates have surfaced, some from the perspective of many different writers, and deserve attention in a review of the literature. In this section, I will examine *Supervision: The Task*, as it relates to the work of administrators. The *Supervision/Evaluation Debate* identifies a practical dilemma which I have explored; and I will discuss how the supervisory process relates to *Teacher Efficacy and Commitment*. In the section called *Teacher Preferences: Choice and Professionalism*, I present the issue of the need for different styles and techniques of supervision. I examine the broad question of terminology and research focused on the "*Crisis of Legitimacy*" and has been addressed.

Supervision: The Task

Sergiovanni and Starratt (2002) noted that supervision of instruction is a task that ranks high on the agenda of school administrators. Sergiovanni and Starratt also stated that this task is often performed in a ritualistic manner, without meaningful outcomes, and is viewed as an administrative responsibility rather than a leadership activity.

Attinello, Lare and Waters (2006) stated, “The process is often a ritual that is required to meet district policy and state law, thus resulting in a time-consuming formality of questionable value” (p. 133). Cardy (1998) said that performance appraisal is one of the most disliked tasks in the workplace. These perceptions of employee development need to be reframed. Glickman (1981) and Glickman et al. (2001) stated that the goal of instructional supervision should be to help teachers learn how to increase their own capacity to help their students achieve learning goals.

Waite (1994) found that most beginning supervisors associate supervision with administration and he recommended mentoring or more appropriate training for those becoming involved in supervision if it is to be perceived in terms of instructional improvement. Waite concluded that teachers come to positions as supervisors with preconceived ideas because of their history and background working in the classroom and their experience with their own supervisors.

Zepeda and Ponticell (1998) wrote that, traditionally, supervision has been confused with evaluation, which is seen to be a summative, compliance function aimed at continued employment. Often, teachers have been viewed as passive participants in the supervision process and the passive recipients of others’ knowledge and expertise. In a study of teachers’ perspectives of supervision, Zepeda and Ponticell (1998) found that, at its worst, supervision is viewed as a “dog and pony show”, a “weapon”, a “meaningless/invisible routine”, a “fix-it list” or an “unwelcome intervention” (p. 75). Conversely, they found that supervision at its best is “validation”, “empowerment”, includes “visible presence”, involves “coaching”, and is characterized by “professionalism” (p. 75). They suggest a move to more collaborative supervisory

practices and the inclusion of a professional development focus in the supervision process.

Schmidt (2003) addressed the issue of getting started with the task. She spoke of how easy it is to get taken away from the important business of classroom observations by the hectic pace and the wide variety of issues faced by a principal. She recommended regular, purposeful visitations directly related to improving learning. Schmidt offered some suggestions for getting out of the office: set up a plan with teachers, let the office staff know where one is going and the importance of the visits, and explain to parents the purpose one's classroom visits.

The Supervision/Evaluation Debate

Some of the studies on collaborative supervisory practice reflect the belief that supervision and evaluation have been confused and should be separate and distinct activities in a school system (Gleave, 1997; Greene, 1992; Zepeda, 2002; Zepeda & Ponticell, 1998). Gleave (1997) used the metaphor of a "bifocal lens" (p. 269) to highlight the difference between appraisal and teacher development. He argued for developmental supervision as a separate process from performance appraisal, although unresolved issues from developmental supervision could trigger performance appraisal.

Zepeda (2002) called teacher supervision and evaluation "two different sides of the same coin" (p.83). She viewed teacher evaluation as being concerned with a single summative statement related to ranking or job retention while viewing supervision as formative and related to ongoing professional development. Zepeda argued for the inclusion of portfolio development as part of the supervisory process. When linked to the supervision process, portfolios can: "serve as a basis for developing a focus for classroom

observations; foster ongoing, reflective dialogue; assist in developing short and long term goals related to practice, and examine professional development activities" (Zepeda, 2002, p. 89). Her long term study backed up her beliefs in portfolio development provided there is an open climate where mutual trust is the norm and a supportive, collaborative administrator is in place.

Attinello et al. (2006) supported Zepeda's contention. They said, "The use of portfolios, a practice closely aligned with constructivism and authentic assessment, can empower teachers to take charge and have a more powerful voice in their evaluation" (p. 134).

Hazi (1994) examined a case study of the legal entanglements of the supervision versus evaluation dilemma. She related that in New Jersey, where the case study occurred, there was a plan that "entangled" what came to be known the as the "formative" and "summative" purposes of supervision (p. 200). In this context, "formative" meant improving and developing while "summative" meant evaluating. In New Jersey, however, supervision and evaluation were legally equivalent terms (p. 200), as they are in many other jurisdictions. Hazi stated that the terms "formative", "summative", "supervision", as well as "improve" and "teacher development" are all confusing, not clearly separated from formal evaluation, and obfuscate what it is that is to be done to teachers (p. 201).

A series of grievances lodged against one supervisor eventually led to a change in job description, removing classroom observations, and the resignation of the supervisor. Hazi blamed confusion between the supervisor role and evaluator role and claimed that the distinction was in the mind of the supervisor, but not necessarily in the minds of the

teachers. "The missing ingredients were trust, collegiality and genuine collaboration, which make the teachers feel safe in giving the supervisor access to their teaching" (p. 212). The supervisor often viewed herself as there to help teachers, but her actions were not necessarily perceived that way by those that she observed.

Hazi said, "…supervision is by practice and by law entangled with evaluation, it is likewise indelibly stigmatized" (p. 215). "Attempts have been made to distinguish the two by *purpose*, by *technique*, by *person*, and by *rhetoric"* (p. 216). Hazi argued that all of these attempts have been unsuccessful because as long as supervision is about the business of the improvement of instruction, then the field remains entangled with evaluation law and ritual.

Teacher Efficacy and Commitment

In a recent study of the relationship between supervision and teacher efficacy and commitment, Ebmeier (2003) found that teacher supervision was most effective in improving teacher efficacy if teachers believed that the principal was interested in what happened in their classrooms. "This implies that formal and often ritualized teacher evaluation practices common across many school districts are of little value in building teacher-principal relationships that lead to improvement of instructional practices" (Ebmeier, 2003, p. 136).

Ebmeier stated that active supervision helps "set the stage" (p. 136) but must be accompanied by other principal activities that focus on classroom learning. Further, teacher supervision, and, in particular, classroom observations, were seen as one way for a principal to demonstrate commitment to teaching (Ebmeier, 2003). Active principal supervision contributes indirectly to confidence in the school administration and

eventually satisfaction with working conditions, but teacher satisfaction and trust of peers play a strong role in teachers' commitment to building goals and satisfaction with their school's working conditions (Ebmeier, 2003).

Rettig (2000) addressed the issue of making supervision more meaningful for teachers and reported a case study of a principal who came up with a wide array of collegial supervision options to address this efficacy issue. Rettig argued for the importance of relationship building and peer observations to address this lack of satisfaction with the process.

Teacher Preferences: Choice and Professionalism

Dollansky (1997) found that over 80 percent of the teachers involved in her study perceived supervision to be important, very important, or highly important. Dollansky also identified that 80 percent of teachers were convinced of the need for supervision. Augustine (2001) found that certain teachers preferred to be fully engaged in their supervisory experiences with a preference for self-evaluation. He also found that there must be continuity for the process to be successful and that trust is critical between supervisor and teacher (2001).

Rural Saskatchewan was the context for both of these research efforts. This research showed the applicability of the theories of Glatthorn (1990), Glickman (1981) and Glickman et al. (2001), in a rural setting.

The "Crisis" of Legitimacy

Holland and Garman (2001) stated that there is a "crisis of legitimacy" (p. 95) in instructional supervision. To support that conclusion, they identified several factors. The main concern was the conception of supervision as "inspection" (p. 96) for bureaucratic

purposes and the negative connotation that is brought by that image. Several major writers on supervision (Sergiovanni, Glickman, and Starratt are mentioned as examples) have moved on to other work. Starratt has even called for "abolishing" supervision. Furthermore, Holland and Garman noted that the term "supervision" has been called into question by organizations with supervision in their name, including the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), which for a time considered removing supervision from its name.

Holland and Garman argued that there is a legitimate purpose for supervision in a democratic society and supported this statement by noting that it is prescribed in the legislation of many jurisdictions. To that end, they examined the laws of several states. What was found was that there was a legitimate authority base for supervision and evaluation in the states examined. While they argued for the principle of the democratic and professional legitimacy of supervision, Holland and Garman did suggest some changes. To conduct evaluation of teachers in a manner consistent with communitarian democratic principles, it must be based on supervisors having "power with" (p. 109) teachers to examine instruction and learning in order to make informed judgments about the quality and effectiveness of that teaching. "Evaluation must empower teachers as co-agents both in the identification of the criteria used to assess their practice and in the design of the protocols in the evaluation process" (p. 110). Finally, Holland and Garman argued that evaluation of teaching must empower teachers to make decisions about the information to be gathered and how that information was used to inform and direct their teaching practice.

Jessiman (1992) stated that there were two opposing views of supervision. The first was, "…supervision as manipulation and teacher control" and the second was, "…supervision as teacher empowerment whereby teachers construct their own knowledge" (p. 21). She advocated for reflective collaboration in the supervisory process. "We must view supervision as a process, a way of life, a cultural structure within which one works with teachers rather than a technique that mechanically specifies a series of steps through which teachers and supervisors must travel" (p. 31).

Conceptual Framework for the Study

In a revealing study, Tunison (2001) found that policy and intentionality in teacher supervision were not always indicators that it was occurring. Teachers participating in Tunison's study identified that, although appropriate policies were in place, and superintendents placed a high priority on supervision, the process was still not happening. Teachers did not believe supervision was a high priority of administrators and many teachers could not remember being supervised. In one case, although a principal identified that he had conducted supervisory visits on a regular basis, none of the teachers reported that he had been in their classrooms to observe a lesson. This disjunction identifies one of the challenges for school districts when implementing supervisory policies or practices.

Siens and Ebmeier (1996) found that the more experience that school-based administrators had, the less they responded to developmental supervision training. The process of insuring that the intentions of the school district are being carried out at the classroom level seems to be challenging at best, and even difficult. Tunison (2001) said,

"…there was little agreement among policy-in-intention, policy-in-implementation, and policy-in-experience with respect to instructional supervision" (p. 96).

Vision should drive everything an organization does (Barker, 1991; Belasco and Stayer, 1993; Nauheimer, 2003), and therefore should act as meta-policy (Downey, 1988) that is intended to guide the development of all other policies and procedures in a school district. Guba (1984) wrote of the effect of interpretations of the word policy and the implications for the life of an organization. Guba identified three policy types, policy-in-intention, policy-in-action and policy-in-experience (p. 65). Tunison (2001) found in his study that there were dramatic differences between policy-in-intention and policy-in-experience. Although the school district involved in Tunison's research had clearly defined policy on supervision (policy-in-intention) and outlined the expectations for action at the school-based administrator level (policy-in-action), teachers still reported they were not experiencing supervisory classroom visits (policy-in-experience) (Tunison, 2001).

Bosetti (1994) studied a school jurisdiction in Alberta as a case study after the province had established a policy on teacher evaluation. She discovered that there was little relationship between the provincial policy and what was happening at the local level. The stated intent of the provincial policy was to ensure the provision of effective instruction to students and the professional growth and development of teachers. However, the main purpose of the evaluation policy of the school jurisdiction was to monitor teacher performance and to discharge its legal responsibility (Bosetti, 1994, p. 50). The intent of improving instruction seemed to have been lost. Bosetti showed that macro-polices on evaluation have limited impact at the local level. "How evaluators

actually conduct teacher evaluations is contingent upon their attitudes, values and beliefs with regard to teaching and education, and how they define their role as evaluator and educational leader" (p. 54).

My study focused on the expressed vision of a school district, as meta-policy (Downey, 1988), and its relationship to day-to-day teacher supervision practices, or policy-in-experience (Guba, 1984). It was useful to consider vision as meta-policy and use this as part of the conceptual framework for my study (see figure 3). School board policy on supervision is considered as policy-in-intention and administrative understandings and procedures are included in the framework as policy-in-action (Guba, 1984). Actual supervisory practices are considered as policy-in-experience, also part of the conceptual framework. For the purposes of the conceptual framework, the key actor involving meta-policy is the board. Actors influencing school district supervisory policy, or policy-in-intention, are the board and the superintendent of schools. The superintendent and principals are actors in administrative procedures on supervision, or policy-in-action. Finally, actual practices, or policy-in-experience, are the realm of principals and teachers involved in day-to-day supervision.

This conceptual framework guided my study on vision in a school district and the relationship of that vision, or meta-policy, to actual practice, or policy-in-experience. The purpose of my study was to examine the relationship between the expressed vision of a selected school district and the practices it undertakes in the area of instructional supervision. I sought to examine teachers' and others' perceptions of the supervisory process in the school district.

Policy Types	School District Supervisory Constructs	Actors
Meta-policy	Mission/Vision	Board of Education
Policy-in-intention	Supervisory Policy	Board/Superintendent
Policy-in-action	Administrative Supervisory Procedures	Superintendent/Principals
Policy-in-experience	Supervisory Practices	Principals/Teachers

Figure 3. Conceptual framework (Adapted from Guba, 1984, p. 65)

Perceptions of supervision are important (Augustyn, 2000; Dollansky, 1997; Hazi, 1994). A review of the literature has shown that developmental supervision was much more effective if the supervisee believed that the supervisor was interested in what happened in the classroom (Ebmeier, 2003).

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between the expressed vision of a selected school district and the practices it undertook in the area of instructional supervision in two schools. I studied the vision and supervisory practices of a school district that was identified as having a reputation for employing exemplary instructional supervision practices. I conducted interviews with selected key people, made observations, and did document analysis as data collection techniques. My collection of thick description (Stake, 1995, 2000) to develop the perceptions of the practices was important to my understanding of the situation. Descriptions of the perceived vision contributed further to my depth of understanding.

In this chapter, I outline the *paradigm of inquiry* for the study, which addresses epistemological considerations of the research. I address practical considerations, including the *planning and design, sampling, data collection and recording, the phases of the study, trustworthiness*, and *data analysis*. I also identify *Ethical considerations*.

The Paradigm of Inquiry

Many writers, (Burrell & Morgan, 1979; Guba, 1981, 1982; Guba & Lincoln, 1985, 1999; Kuhn, 1970; and Lincoln & Guba, 2000) have referred to the notion of "paradigms" to describe the manner in which individuals and groups see their world. A paradigm is essentially a "world view" or ontology.

This study is based on *principles associated with* the naturalistic paradigm. Guba and Lincoln (1999) discussed naturalistic enquiry as a paradigm of disciplined enquiry, and contrasted it with rationalistic enquiry. According to Guba and Lincoln, the

naturalistic paradigm was often referred to, mistakenly, as the case study or qualitative paradigm. The naturalistic paradigm has been, thus, often associated with qualitative research.

Denzin and Lincoln (2000) defined qualitative research as, "a situated activity that locates the observer in the world" (p. 3). They stated that it, "consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible" (p. 3). Denzin and Lincoln (2000) noted that qualitative research is associated with the traditions of many perspectives including positivist and postpositivist, as well as interpretive viewpoints (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). The terms "qualitative" and "naturalistic" research seemed to be used inconsistently, and somewhat interchangeably, in the literature, as noted by Gulka (1992) and Owens (1982). For the purposes of this research, the term "naturalistic" has been used. In the naturalistic paradigm, it is assumed that there exist multiple realities that are, in essence, constructions in the minds of people (Guba & Lincoln, 1999) as opposed to rationalistic enquiry, which assumes the existence of a single, tangible reality.

Gulka (1992) noted that every paradigm has its accepted ways of conducting research and inquiry for the purposes of generating data and information with a view to explaining reality. He also stated that these ways stem from the assumptions (axioms) of a given paradigm and find expression in the postures – the manner in which inquiry and research are structured and conducted – associated with that paradigm. The accepted way of conducting inquiry is often referred to as a methodology. Guba and Lincoln (1999) compared the postural differences of the naturalistic and the rationalistic paradigms. They noted that naturalists prefer qualitative methods, but this should not be taken as the

chief mark of distinction between the two paradigms. According to Guba and Lincoln, either methodology is appropriate for either paradigm, although there is a higher correlation between quantitative and rationalistic, on the one hand, and qualitative and naturalistic on the other.

Naturalistic inquiry has its origins in ethnography as a form of anthropological study. The postural differences between rationalists and naturalists mean that there are significant differences in beliefs surrounding sources of theory, knowledge types, instruments, design, and setting (Guba and Lincoln, 1999). Naturalistic enquiry centres on theory that grows from the data and is grounded in experience. Naturalists assume the existence of tacit knowledge: insights, intuitions, and apprehensions that are not empirically verifiable but are nonetheless known to the observer. Humans are preferred instruments in naturalistic studies and are valued for their insightfulness, and other interpretive qualities (Stake, 2000; Guba & Lincoln, 1999). Design of a naturalistic inquiry is not related to *a priori* theory, but is allowed to emerge as the study ensues. A rationalist prefers a laboratory setting for research, while a naturalist prefers natural settings.

This study was not ethnography because it would not meet the test of time needed to study the organizations longitudinally through a complete cycle of their routine (M.P. Scharf, personal communication, February 12, 2004). This type of study was defined as a form of research by Stake (2000), as interest in individual cases, not by the methods of inquiry used. In his earlier writing, Stake (1988) defined a case study as “the study of a bounded system” (p. 255). Case study research is not sampling research; that distinction is a fact asserted by all the major researchers in the field, including Stake and others.

However, selecting cases must be done so as to maximize what can be learned in the period of time available for the study. The unit of analysis is a critical factor in the case study. It is typically a system of action rather than an individual or group of individuals. Case studies tend to be selective, focusing on one or two issues that are fundamental to understanding the system being examined.

Wolcott (1985) demanded procedural honesty when he said that the educational researcher often borrowed *ethnographic techniques* but he/she was rarely *doing ethnography* because the purpose was not cultural interpretation, but linking descriptive research to efforts at change and improvement (pp. 200-201). I conducted a case study of a school district, and two schools within the district, looking for commonalities, similarities, and differences.

Planning and Design

Researchers must be extensively involved in planning no matter which paradigm they are operating within. Naturalistic researchers view the design as "providing an emergent plan for a highly interactive process of gathering data from which analysis was developed" (Owens, 1982, p. 11). Owens (1982) said that there were three elements that were normally found in the plan for a naturalistic research study: (a) the research strategy, (b) strategies for collecting data, and (c) the audit trail. He used a graphic of a funnel to illustrate such a plan (see Figure 4). I used this as the framework for collection and treatment of the data.

Tesch (1989) identified three issues that deserve attention in a naturalistic study. They are the research topic, the role of theory, and the literature review. Tesch argued that choosing the purpose should precede all other decisions, because the entire research

approach will depend on that decision. Once the purpose has been chosen it becomes the guiding principle for all further planning

Tesch said that existing theory could potentially impinge on the findings at some point in the project. The literature review served as a guide for me to know if I was exploring new ground. Lincoln and Guba (1985) outlined what needs to be spelled out before doing a naturalistic inquiry.

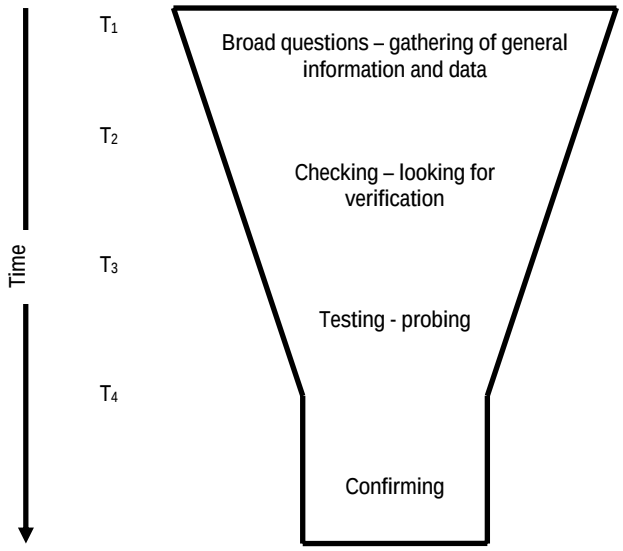

Figure 4. General outline of the plan for a naturalistic study (Owens, 1982, p. 12).

Lincoln and Guba mentioned the following: (a) the overall plan for the study, (b) the hypothesis to be investigated, (c) the variables to be included, (d) the relationships expected among those variables, (e) the methods (instruments) for data collection, and (f) the modes of data analysis.

Owens (1982) addressed the issue of data analysis and proposed a model wherein data would be examined as it was collected, but during the period when there was more and more data, the analysis would become deeper and deeper. Early in the study, most of

my energy went into the data collection and, as the study progressed, more and more time was spent on data analysis, which continued to guide and direct the focus of the study and the need for more, or different types of, data collection (see Figure 5). This model made sense to me as an approach to naturalistic inquiry in a case study setting.

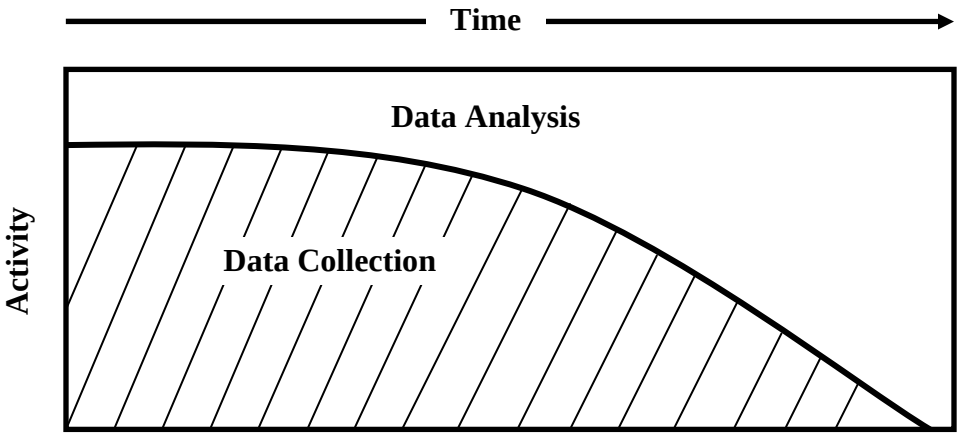

Figure 5. Typical pattern of data collection and data analysis in a naturalistic study (Owens, 1982, p. 12).

Sampling

Selecting the subjects for research was a critical part of the process. Naturalistic sampling is very different from traditional sampling in that it is based on informational rather than statistical criteria (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The purpose of sampling is to include as much information as possible and to detail the many specifics that give the context its unique flavour (Lincoln and Guba). A review of the literature showed that reputational sampling, or nominations, was seen as a legitimate form of selection (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Stake, 2000; Bogdan & Biklen, 2003).

Reputational sampling has been used before in Canada in various contexts. Gulka (1992) studied three Saskatchewan directors of education who had been nominated by the educational partners in the province for providing exemplary leadership with curriculum

implementation and school improvement initiatives. Holdaway and Genge's (1991) study of effective school superintendents in Alberta was an example of a reputational nomination process for selection for a study in the context of another province.

I asked a number of educational partners in a province in Eastern Canada to identify a school district that had a reputation for exemplary instructional supervision practices.

The following educational partners were contacted and questioned:

a. The Teachers' Union.
b. The Provincial Educational Leadership Consortium.
c. The School of Education at a University in the Province.
d. The School Administrators' Association.
e. The Senior Executive Director, Public Schools, Department of Education.
f. The Regional Education Officers, Department of Education.

As this process began, it became clear to me that the eastern province would be a different environment to conduct a reputational nomination process than had been anticipated, based on my experience in Saskatchewan. When I had contacted similar organizations in Saskatchewan, the officials had indicated that they would have been able to suggest a district, at least prior to amalgamation in January, 2006, which had a reputation for exemplary instructional supervision practices (without any further research or thought). However, when organizations in the province in Eastern Canada were contacted, it was much more challenging to get a clear nominee. Because of the number of universities in the province, it was difficult to find someone with a provincial perspective. Most of the universities seemed to have a regional focus, and were not

aware of practices province-wide. Several people indicated that they needed to get back to me after talking to someone else in the organization, and others referred me to other organizations.

The list of partners above is the names of the organizations that were contacted in the final analysis. The district that was suggested by the largest number of the organizations, and with what seemed like the greatest level of certainty by the nominators, was asked to participate in the study. The names of two other boards that were mentioned by the nominators were kept as back-up in case the district invited was unable or unwilling to participate.

The contact with the district was made when I spoke to the Superintendent of Schools. I used a series of questions and discussion points in my conversations with the potential district site to corroborate the validity of the nomination process in an attempt to ensure validity and credibility of the site selection process. The Superintendent and the Director of Education Services referred immediately to work they had done in the area of instructional supervision and seemed to be pleased that their district was nominated.

In collaboration with senior officials in the district, the school sites were selected. They were from widely separate geographical areas of the district, were representative of a high school and an elementary school, and were disparate in size. The schools are profiled in Chapter 4.

Data Collection and Recording

Naturalistic researchers often use a multiplicity of data collection techniques and strategies. The multimodal approach to data collection techniques can generate “richer data” and “thicker description” (Stake, 2000) while providing for triangulation and

validation, which tend to support the credibility and trustworthiness of the study (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003; Owens, 1982; Wolcott, 1985). For these reasons, a multimodal approach to data collection was used, with me as the research instrument.

The multimodal approach indicates the use of a variety of data collection techniques. For the purpose of my study, I used interviews, observations and document analysis, with accompanying field notes.

Human as Instrument

Gulka (1992) noted:

> Despite the fact that the naturalistic paradigm utilizes ethnographic research techniques, it demands attention to context and aims for understanding of the phenomenon being studied, it is the 'human as instrument' that uniquely distinguished this inquiry from the positivistic approach. (p. 88)

Lincoln and Guba (1985) identified seven advantages that humans have as research instruments in naturalistic inquiries: (a) responsiveness, (b) adaptability, (c) holistic emphasis, (d) knowledge base expansion, (e) processual immediacy, (f) opportunities for classification and summarization, and (g) opportunity to explore atypical or idiosyncratic responses (pp. 193-194).

For this study, there were valid reasons to use the "human as instrument". There was only one site and one person did the data collection, thereby providing for consistency of the "instrument". The second reason was the experience and background of the researcher.

My background was outlined in Chapter 1, and my experience in the field of instructional supervision was noted. This background influenced my ability to provide analysis that guided data collection. The observations of instructional supervision

interactions, and other interactions that occurred, were in situations that were generally familiar to me. Determining if the situations were natural or forced was a challenge, but experience helped to guide my interpretations.

As noted, the reputational nature of the nomination process was a positive factor in the success of the research. The fact that the district was being studied as an "exemplary" school district with regard to supervision practices was a factor in minimizing the anxiety of the participants.

Data Collection Techniques

A multimodal approach to data collection has been suggested to ensure the credibility of the data (Gulka, 1992). Multiple techniques help to ensure the trustworthiness of the data. In this study, I used three forms of data collection: interviews, observations, and document analysis. I took field notes to contribute to the total picture.

Interviews

Interviews are one of the most common and powerful techniques used to try to understand human interaction (Fontana & Frey, 2000). Bogdan and Biklen (2003) recognized the importance of interviews as a key naturalistic research technique. They called an interview "a purposeful conversation between two people, but sometimes involving more, that is directed by one to get information from the other" (pp. 94-95). Lincoln and Guba (1985) offered five reasons for using interviewing as a data collection technique: (a) here-and-now construction, (b) reconstruction, (c) projection, (d) triangulation, and (e) member checks (p. 268).

Semi-structured interviews, as described by Bogdan and Biklen (2003), helped me to be confident that I was getting comparable data across subjects without restricting understanding of how the subjects themselves structured the topic at hand. The idea of focusing and directing the interview was preserved with a semi-structured approach (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Qualitative interviewing is more like a conversation than a formal, highly structured exchange between interviewer and interviewee (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). To stimulate the flow of conversation, but to preserve the opportunity to "focus" the interview, this study included semi-structured interviews as one of the data gathering techniques.

Interviews were conducted with the Superintendent, the Director of Education Services, an Area Supervisor, the Coordinator of Human Resources, the Board Chair, two principals and three teachers at one site, and four at the other in the district that was studied. Audio recordings were used to facilitate the process. Interview protocols were developed. The interview protocols for all participants are attached in Appendix A as part of the Ethics Proposal. The interview protocols were developed based on the research questions posed in Chapter 1. It was important to determine if the interview protocols would generate the data needed to complete the study, so, to that end, a piloting process was initiated.

I piloted the protocols with non-participants in the study. I contacted and interviewed the Director of Human Resources, a principal, and a teacher in a district not involved in the study. The flexibility of the instrument was maintained, but the appropriateness of the questions was influenced by the piloting process. I made some changes based on the answers that I received in the pilot situation.

I conducted the interviews with the teachers and principals first in the research process, followed by the senior administrators and the Board Chair. I completed the interviews before the document analysis was done so that I did not have a predetermined notion of the policies and what I "should" hear or see, before I conducted the interviews or the observations.

Observations

Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested that observations "provide the here and now experiences in depth" (p. 273). They enable the researcher to see "what people do" (Wolcott, 1985, p.191). Observation has been characterized as the fundamental base of all research methods and it has been noted that even studies based on interviews employ observational techniques that lend meaning to the words of the person being interviewed (Angrosino & Mays de Perez, 2000). Bogdan and Biklen (2003) wrote that researchers should "unobtrusively keep a written record of what happens as well as collect other forms of descriptive data" (p. 73).

It generally has been assumed that naturalistic observation does not interfere with the people or activities being observed (Angrosino & Mays de Perez, 2000). Angrosino and Mays de Perez further stated that even cultural anthropologists, who have usually thought of themselves as "participant observers" and who have set out to achieve a degree of subjective immersion in the cultures they study, still claim to be able to maintain their scientific objectivity. It is not clear whether objectivity can be maintained, but observation as a tool is clearly part of the fabric of research methodology in naturalistic inquiry. "In social science research, as in legal cases, eyewitness testimony

from trustworthy observers has been seen as a particularly convincing form of verification" (p. 674).

Lincoln and Guba (1985) noted the distinction between participant and non-participant observers. In a postmodern milieu, it is possible to question whether observational objectivity is either desirable or feasible as a goal (Angrosino & Perez, 2000). For the purposes of this study, I was generally a non-participant. There were times when limited participation could not be avoided without being contrary or impolite, but, those situations were limited in number and duration. There has been no attempt to disguise the impact of my presence or my experience on the data that were collected. It is hoped that my experience enriched and enlivened the observational data.

I used "focused observations", as described by Angrosino and Perez (2000, p. 677), where certain things, defined as irrelevant, can be ignored and which concentrate on well-defined types of group activities. It was part of the study to observe instructional supervision interactions. What was observed was influenced by the rapport that was established and the trust relationships that were formed. My employment position may have had some effect on the observations. Perhaps because of my position, the principals discussed situations openly and allowed observations of meetings and interactions which may not have been observed otherwise. Everyone knew the study had the endorsement of the Superintendent of the district involved, so access was provided and general cooperation was outstanding. It is impossible to know how much cooperation was because of my positional authority or my perceived relationship with the Superintendent of the district in the study. When I conducted the interviews, the teachers did not seem to

know of my position and may not have been influenced by it, judging by the relaxed tone and the quality of my interactions with them.

The observations were conducted on days that the interviews occurred or on other days when I visited the schools. These visitations occurred after the dates for the interviews with the school-based personnel and before the interviews with senior officials and the document analysis. It is hoped that I was able to see what the day-to-day practice was, and hear what the perception of the practice was, before looking at what it "should" be according the words of the senior officials and the documents for analysis.

Document Analysis

Lincoln and Guba (1985) stated that documents and records are singularly useful sources of information. They defined five reasons why documents and records are useful to naturalistic research: (a) normally they are available at a low-cost or free, (b) they are a stable source of information, (c) they are a rich source of information, and contextually relevant, (d) normally they are legally unassailable, and (e) they are, unlike human respondents, non-reactive (p. 276-277). Hodder's (2000) work supported Lincoln and Guba's assertions, but added that documents and records may provide information that is not available in spoken form. Written text is an artifact, and the writing down of words often allows language and meanings to be controlled more effectively and linked to strategies of codification (Hodder, 2000).

Berg (2004) said that schools and their organizations have a reputation for creating an abundance of written records, files, and communications. Official documents (and others) often convey important and useful information that a researcher may use as

data. The use of these data corroborates the multimodal approach of naturalistic inquiry and assists in establishing trustworthiness and credibility (Gulka, 1992).

For the purposes of this study, I reviewed mission statements, policies, memos, training documents, newsletters, schedules, procedural handbooks, and other relevant documentation that became available. A complete list is available Appendix B. One teacher offered her supervision report and this was a valuable source of information for the study.

Phases of the Research

I approached the study in phases, as discussed by Lincoln and Guba (1985, pp. 235-236). Before beginning the phases as outlined by Lincoln and Guba, it was necessary for this study to have a "nomination phase". This was phase one and occurred when a school district was selected for participation in the study through the nomination process. As previously described, the major partners in education in a province in Eastern Canada were asked which district had a reputation for exemplary supervision practices. The Senior Executive Director, Public Schools, Provincial Department of Education, a representative of the Regional Education Officers, Provincial Department of Education, the Provincial Teachers' Union, the Provincial Educational Leadership Consortium, the School Administrators Association, and the school of education at a university in the province were contacted.

The district discussed with the most frequency and certainty as a district with exemplary instructional supervision practices was the Midlands Regional School Board (MRSB) (this is a pseudonym). The Superintendent of Schools of MRSB was approached to see if he would consider allowing his district to participate in the study.

He was initially positive, but said that he wished to discuss it with his management team. In the next week, a description of the study was forwarded to the Superintendent and formal approval was received.

The second phase was the "orientation and overview" phase. This phase was the time to make contact, to introduce the researcher to the district, and to get some sense of what was important enough to follow up in detail. Two schools were selected for study from widely separated parts of the system, representing different school configuration and size.

Phase three was the "focused exploration" phase. After phase two, I developed structured protocols for interviews and appropriate guides for observational data and document analysis. The tools were then utilized and the data were collected as part of phase three. In phase three, Owens's (1982) funnel, (see Figure 1) became useful. As the study progressed, "Checking, verifying, testing, probing, and confirming activities will follow in a funnel-like design resulting in analysis-checking, verifying, and confirming" (p. 11). Figure 2 shows the process of data collection over time, with analysis becoming deeper as the study progressed.

Phase four was the "member check" phase. I developed site reports and shared them with the participants to confirm that the data had captured the information as constructed by the informants, or to it was corrected accordingly, to establish the credibility of the case.

The research phases were not discreet. They were overlapping and were progressing at different rates as the interviews were conducted and the sites were studied.

Trustworthiness

Lincoln and Guba (1985) stated that the basic issue related to trustworthiness is simple: "How can an inquirer persuade his or her audiences that the findings of a particular inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of?" (p. 290). They suggested that the appropriate criteria for a naturalist stem from questions about truth value, applicability, consistency, and neutrality. They also proposed that the naturalist should meet tests of *credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability*, as opposed to the rationalist who would examine internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity. These naturalistic tests to build trustworthiness were important for the purposes of this study.

Credibility

Owens (1982) discussed the need for credibility. One of the procedures he identified to enhance credibility is *triangulation*. Bogdan and Biklen (2003) stated that the word *triangulation* has been used widely in discussions of qualitative research. They noted that the word is now often used in an imprecise way so that it has become hard to determine what is meant by it, but that it originated from the social sciences to convey the idea that one needs more than one source of information to establish a fact.

Denzin and Lincoln (1978) said that four types of triangulation exist: use of multiple and different sources, methods, investigators, or theories. Three different data collection techniques were used in my study (i.e. interviews, observation and document analysis), and within the study, a number of different sources were used. I interviewed the Superintendent, Director of Education Services, an Area Supervisor, Coordinator of Human Resources, Board Chair, principals and teachers; I observed several different

situations; and I examined various documents. Field notes helped to add detail to the picture. The goal of the naturalistic researcher is to establish credibility in the process of the inquiry that will lead to the trustworthiness of the study; I pursued that goal in this study.

Transferability

While rationalists speak of external validity, naturalists discuss transferability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). The naturalist cannot assure transferability; all the researcher can do is provide enough thick description to allow the reader interested in making a transfer to reach a conclusion about whether transfer can be contemplated as a possibility (Stake, 2000, 1995; Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Bogdan and Biklen, 2003). The term "generalization" was used in the literature in a similar context. Stake (1995) said that case study is a poor basis for generalization but certain situations or ideas may come repetitively that will lead some to draw generalizations. Stake stated that case study technique is not chosen to optimize generalization but to carry out the real business of case study, which is particularization.

Transferability as a test will only be met if there is enough information provided in the study to allow the reader to draw conclusions about the possibility of application in another situation. I have attempted to provide the "thick description" necessary for this possibility to occur.

Dependability and Confirmability

The main technique for determining dependability and confirmability is the audit trail (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). An inquiry audit must include a residue of records stemming from the inquiry. The records should be well coded and kept in such a manner

that allows for the researcher or the auditor to systematize, relate, cross-reference, and attach priorities to data (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Olesen (2000) and Janesick (2000) recognized the need for qualitative researchers to establish credibility, and thereby confirmability, through such strategies as audit trails. Both authors promoted building in the audit trail as an important component of the planning for an inquiry process.

An auditor should be engaged, at an appropriate point in a study using the principles of naturalistic inquiry, when cooptation is not an issue, and this auditor should see himself or herself as acting on behalf of the general readership of the inquiry report (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). For the purposes of this study, an auditor, who was also my faculty advisor, was engaged when data collection was virtually completed and when the analysis portion of the process had begun to deepen. It was important at that point to check the data and to have the coding system reviewed.

"The two tasks of the inquiry auditor may be taken metaphorically as very similar to the tasks of a fiscal auditor (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p 318)." The faculty advisor examined the process of the inquiry for its dependability, and the product of the inquiry to determine that it was supported by data and was internally coherent. The process was also employed as a means of checking the validity of the coding process used in the analysis of the transcripts.

Data Analysis

Bogdan and Biklen (2003) described the data analysis process as systematically arranging and searching the results of data collection to come up with findings. Stake (1995) said, "There is no particular moment when data analysis begins. Analysis is a matter of giving meaning to first impressions as well as to final compilations (p. 71)".

Lincoln and Guba (1985) discussed and elaborated on the Constant Comparative Method of data analysis first articulated by Glaser and Strauss.

This approach is particularly suited to a study where emerging themes and data collection inform each other, but where formal analysis and theory development does not occur until the data collection is well on its way to completion (Gulka, 1992). The four stages of the Constant Comparative Method are: (a) comparing incidents applicable to each category, (b) integrating categories and their properties, (c) delimiting the theory, and (d) writing the theory (Lincoln and Guba, 1985 p. 339).

I used a process *based on* the Constant Comparative Method for data analysis during this research. This method was instructive in outlining four categories of activities that described the steps through which the researcher works: unitizing (coding), categorizing, filling in patterns, and member checks (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 344). This process supported the organization, description, and interpretation of thick, rich data from multiple sources. The data analysis process began in the field but became much deeper and more thorough as the data collection process moved to completion (Owens, 1982, p. 12). The flow of a naturalistic inquiry takes researchers to theory involving negotiated outcomes leading to a case report, which was ideographically interpreted and tentatively applied (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 188).

Ethical Considerations

It has been important for both me and the University that the highest ethical standards have been upheld throughout this research project. Credibility and trust must be established and maintained. Bogdan and Biklen (2003) offered the following ethical guidelines: (a) avoid research sites where informants may feel coerced to participate in

research, (b) honour informants' privacy; there is a difference in informants' commitment to the study when participant observation is conducted in a public place (where people are spending the time they would normally spend there), and when they are involved in an interview, (c) unless otherwise agreed to, the subjects' identities should be protected so the information collected does not embarrass or in other ways harm them, (d) treat subjects with respect and seek their cooperation with the research, (e) in negotiating permission to do a study, make it clear to those involved in negotiations what the terms of the agreement are, and abide by that contract; and (f) tell the truth when writing up and reporting findings (pp. 44-45).

I asked the Superintendent for his consent to be interviewed and for permission for the Midlands Regional School Board to participate in the study. The consent forms are contained in the final sections of the Ethics Proposal which is Appendix A. I asked The Director of Education Services and the Coordinator of Human Resources for their consent to be interviewed and to be observed if they were involved in instructional supervision activities. I also asked the Board Chair for her consent to be interviewed. I asked principals for their consent to be interviewed, for consent to be observed participating in the instructional supervision process, and for consent for their schools to be part of the study. I asked the teachers for consent to be interviewed and for consent to be observed participating in the instructional supervision process.

I provided a letter of consent to each participant at the beginning of the study. The participants attested, using that form, that they had read and understood the description of the study provided, had been provided with the opportunity to ask questions, and had had their questions satisfactorily answered. The participants indicated

their willingness to participate in the study as described through a signature. The letter of consent included the individual's opportunity to withdraw from the study without penalty at any time and also ensured the right to confidentiality. I provided participants with a copy of the signed consent form for their own records. Consent forms have been kept separate from participant information.

I assigned pseudonyms to all the participants in the study as well as the district involved. I did everything possible to ensure the confidentiality of the participants, however, due to the small and specific sample size, complete anonymity and confidentiality could not be guaranteed. I informed participants that they may be identifiable by what they said.

The guidelines suggested by Bogdan and Biklen corresponded well with the Guiding Ethical Principles outlined in the Tri-council Policy Statement: (a) respect for human dignity, (b) respect for free and informed consent, (c) respect for vulnerable persons, (d) respect for privacy and confidentiality, (e) respect for justice and inclusiveness, (f) balancing harms and benefits, (g) minimizing harms, and (h) maximizing benefits (pp. i.5-i.6).

The research was conducted in a manner consistent with the guidelines described by Bogdan and Biklen (2003) and the principles of the Tri-council Policy Statement. The ethics guidelines established by the University of Saskatchewan Research Board were followed carefully in the conduct of this study.

Ethical Methods and Procedures

I collected data using interviews, document analysis, and observation. I conducted all interviews, document analysis, and observations. I took field notes in many

situations. I conducted Interviews with the Superintendent, the Director of Education Services, the Coordinator of Human Resources, an Area Supervisor, the Board Chair, two principals and four teachers at one school site and three at the other. I conducted all interviews in private locations. I used audio recordings to facilitate the process. It was the part of the study to observe instructional supervision interactions and, in two instances, this occurred. I reviewed the mission/vision statement, policies, minutes, memos, training documents, schedules, newsletters, procedural handbooks, and other relevant documentation that was available. One of the participants offered me a supervision report for my review.

I followed procedures to maintain confidentiality in interviews and observations. I addressed the limits of confidentiality and anonymity and all possible precautions were taken on my part to ensure confidentiality and anonymity of the participants. For example, audio tapes were kept in a locked location and no one was told where I was on the days when I was conducting research except my administrative assistant (who had to know for emergencies and who is bound by confidentiality in her position). To date the district used in the study has not been identified to anyone in the province who did not need to know and the schools involved have not been named.

Summary

I selected the principles associated with the naturalistic paradigm of systematic and disciplined inquiry to guide this study of how expressed mission and vision influence supervisory practices in a selected school district. I identified a school district in Eastern Canada with a reputation for using exemplary instructional supervision practices through a reputational survey process, to participate in the research.

I used semi-structured interviews, observations, and document analysis as data collection techniques to attain thick, rich description. Through analysis of the data I was able to identify themes and categories of information that offered suggestions of how mission and vision interacted with instructional supervision practices.

I designed the study to be as credible and trustworthy as possible. My bias and experience were influences on this type of research in that I had considerable experience in the area of instructional supervision, and my employment position may have been a factor in establishing open and trusting relationships with the subjects of the inquiry. I maintained the highest ethical standards for conducting research throughout the study.

CHAPTER 4

THE SETTING AND THE FINDINGS

Through this study, I have examined the relationship between the expressed vision of a school district with a reputation for exemplary instructional supervision, and its instructional supervision practices in two schools. The study was conducted in a school district in Eastern Canada, during the period of March to June, 2006.

In this chapter, I describe *The Setting* for the study in order to set the context for the research. To add further contextualization, I have introduced and profiled the respondents to the interviews. To draw together the results of the study, in *The Findings*, I address the research questions and the conceptual framework.

The Setting

The Province where I conducted the study was divided into regional school boards that operated schools throughout the province. Each region was governed by a school board. In addition to elected members on the boards from geographical areas, there were elected or appointed members of minority communities. Boards generally had a governance role while a superintendent was the chief executive officer of the board and the leading staff member. The most recent amalgamation to the present number of school boards took place in 1995.

Midlands Regional School Board

The Region nominated by the educational partners to participate in the study, assigned the pseudonym of the Midlands Regional School Board (MRSB), was a typical school district for the province. It represented a large geographical area with significant disparity in the population. Portions of the area were agricultural, and in the coastal areas

fishing was the centre of the economy. There was one significant urban centre with fewer than 20,000 people. The district had a population of over 20,000 students. There were approximately 80 elementary, middle, or secondary schools and four adult high schools (for students over 18 who had been out of school for at least a year).

The district had a Superintendent as the CEO, who had four directors reporting directly to him (see Figure 6): the Director of Education Services, the Director of Human Resources Services, the Director of Finance, and the Director of Operational Services. The responsibilities around instructional supervision were divided between Educational Services and Human Resources. Human Resources was responsible for maintaining the data-base where the reports were kept and for ensuring that the process occurred.

The Coordinator of Human Resources for teacher union employees was responsible for monitoring completion of the reports and for sending letters reminding principals and other supervisors if reports were not forthcoming. Principals, however, reported through Education Services. Area Supervisors were the immediate supervisors of the principals and they reported to the Director of Education Services. These supervisors were mandated to conduct supervision of the principals and through that process, and the reporting structure, were in a position to remind the principals of their leadership and supervisory responsibilities.

The schools in MRSB were divided into four Areas. The Areas generally corresponded with three counties and one municipal district, which were important geographical and structural entities in the province. All names mentioned are pseudonyms for the purposes of the study.

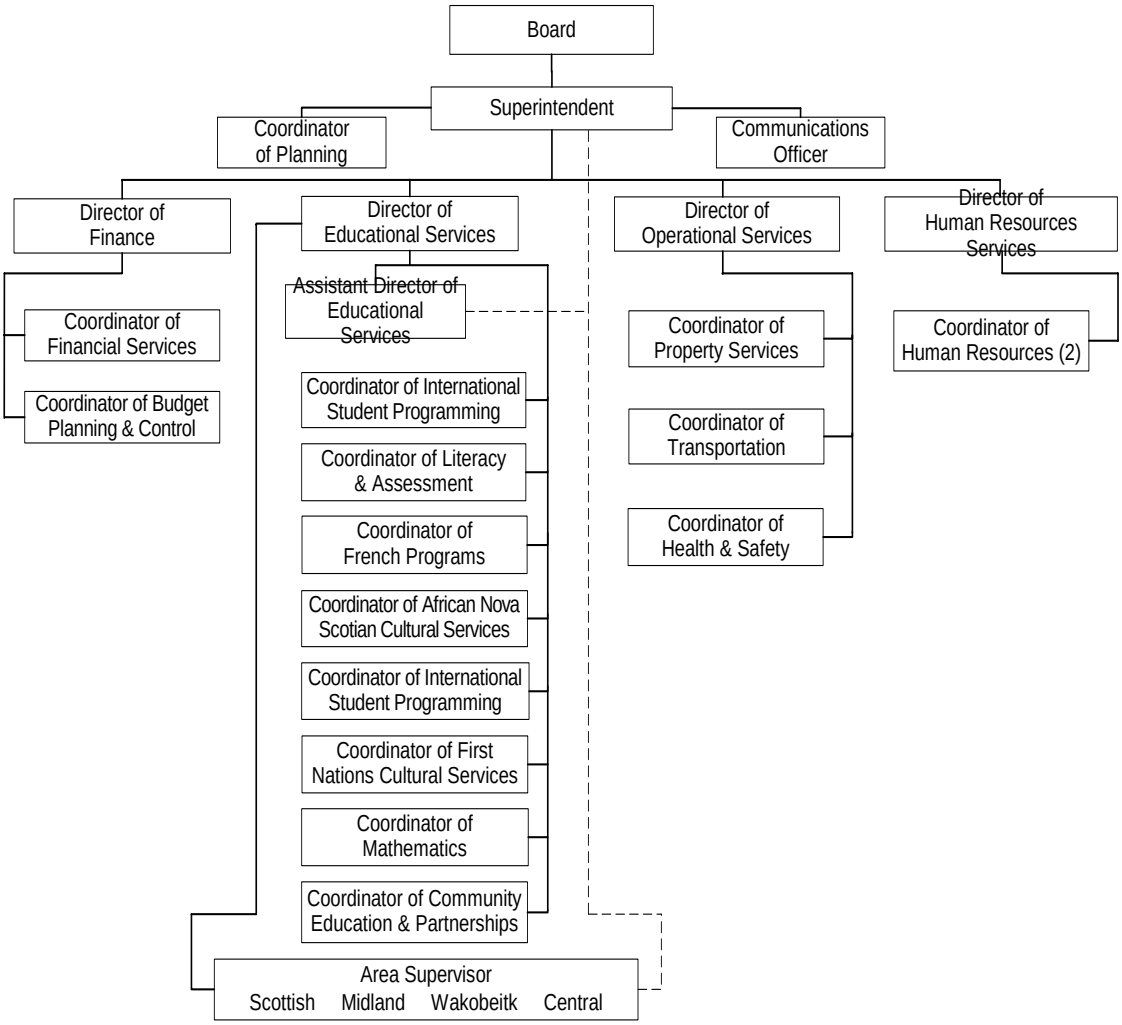

Figure 6. MRSB administrative structure

The Areas

The Scottish Area encompassed schools in Northeast County in the northeast portion of the district. There were fourteen elementary schools, six middle/junior, and three high schools. Northeast County was known for its rich Scottish Heritage (Regional School Board Website, Retrieved on July 4, 2006).

The Midland Area encompassed schools in North West County. There were sixteen elementary schools, one junior high school, and seven high schools. It was a coastal district but stretched inland and along the provincial border. Northwest County

was known for being rich in natural resources. Regional School Board Website, Retrieved on July 4, 2006).

The Wakobeitk Area encompassed schools in North Central County. There were sixteen elementary schools, four middle/junior, and two high schools. The Wakobeitk Area nucleus was the major urban centre in the Region (Regional School Board Website, Retrieved on July 4, 2006).

The Central Area encompassed schools in the Municipality of East County. This area contained fourteen elementary schools, one middle school, and three high schools. East County was one of the fastest growing areas in the Province, with many communities in close proximity to the largest metropolitan area in the province. There were also four Adult High Schools in MRSB; one in each Area (Regional School Board Website, Retrieved on July 4, 2006).

The two schools that I studied, henceforth known as Green Meadows Elementary School (GMES) and Coastal District High School (CDHS), were selected from different parts of the Region. They represented contrasting grade configurations (GMES was a kindergarten to grade six school and CDHS was a grade seven to 12 school).

Green Meadows Elementary School (GMES)

GMES was a kindergarten to grade six school with 181 students during the 2005-2006 school year. It was in the Central Area. There were ten full time equivalent teachers on staff. The staff had a wide range of experience: some staff new to teaching, some close to retirement and most in between.

GMES was located approximately 15 minutes from the largest centre in the district, and staff, therefore, had the option of living in an urban setting in close proximity

or living in a more rural environment. The provincial capital and largest urban centre in the Province was approximately 40 minutes away on a twinned highway.

The school offered after-school sports activities for students on the basis of funding that had been secured through a grant. In discussions with the physical education specialist, I learned that she took pride in having students participate in tournaments and outings. Even though it was a relatively small elementary school, GMES had a cafeteria operated by a private company that generated some profits that were used to buy materials and subsidize activities at the school.

The school operated in a largely middle to upper-middle class suburban area, but there were some families who lived in poverty. Parents were supportive of the school, but it was challenging to find parents who would volunteer in the school because of the large number of families with two parents employed outside the home.

When I arrived at the school for the first time, I was greeted by the principal and I was given a room in which I could conduct interviews and leave my materials for the day. I was given ice-water and a bowl of hard candies. Over the course of that day, several people: educational assistants, a speech pathologist, a janitor, and a volunteer stopped by the room to say hello and each of them asked questions about the study. All of them commented that the staff in the school was friendly and welcoming. The principal spoke of the climate of trust that had been created and how professional sharing occurred among teachers because of the climate of openness and trust.

One teacher who was participating in a one-to-one laptop project invited me into her room to see the project in action. Another teacher offered to share her performance appraisal documents. I dropped into the classroom with the laptop project twice over the

course of my visits to the school, but there was silent reading time occurring on the first occasion and physical education on the second so I did not get an opportunity to see the students using the laptops. The teacher and I had a discussion about the project in the staffroom over one of the recess breaks. I was, however, able to get copies of the performance appraisal documents from the teacher who offered those to me. They became a part of the data for this study, and contributed to the various sections on policy-in-experience in particular.

I spent time in the staff room on several occasions on my visits to the school. I brought baked goods with me on two of the visits and it was my impression that not many teachers came to the staff room at the morning and afternoon breaks unless there was a special invitation. The principal invited the staff to the staffroom at the morning break on the days when I brought the "treats". Most staff came on those occasions and, particularly the first time, were friendly and welcoming. Many expressed thanks for the treats.

Noon hour seemed to be the time when staff routinely came together, mainly to eat, and with that came much conversation. The staffroom had a table with about ten chairs around it and there were some lounge chairs on the periphery. I was invited to help myself to coffee and make myself at home. Staff members insisted I join them at the table around which most of them sat at noon breaks and when they came there at morning and afternoon recess. They asked for my thoughts and welcomed me into the conversations. I felt comfortable very quickly and I found people seemed genuinely interested in my study.

In the staffroom I witnessed many professional conversations, which occupied more than half of the discussion time. For example, one teacher was asked about and was sharing how she used a strategy called “book trees”. Others were discussing projects they were working on with students. There tended to be one conversation to which most people were paying attention, but sometimes conversations took place on the periphery for a short time and then people would “tune back in” to the general conversation.

Staff and students were polite to me in all my visits to the school. I found it affirming and comforting that students stopped to talk with me at break times and asked my name and what brought me to the school. It was a friendly environment: when I was in a classroom, students talked to me openly and positively when I asked them questions about their work. Teachers asked if there was anything they could do to help with the study. They seemed to be pleased I was taking an interest in their school.

Kate had been a full-time principal for the 2005-2006 school year, but because of declining enrolments she was not to have as much administrative time for the 2006-2007 school year. This change in administration time was of concern to Kate, as she spent her day interacting with students and staff in a pro-active manner and she thought it would be difficult to continue all of these activities if she had a significant teaching component in her day. She said,

> The challenge is time. In all that we do time is a big challenge and having that opportunity for conversation and reflection. I don’t know of a better way of doing it currently.

The school had a 50 percent administrative assistant and, in the afternoon, when she was not there, Kate carried a cordless phone, so that she could circulate in the building while maintaining the ability for the office to receive calls. She was concerned

about maintaining the operation of the office in the afternoon when she had to teach, because she would not be able to continue to have the telephone available at all times. I checked Kate's office numerous times over during my visits to the school and I only found her in the office one time. She spent considerable time in other parts of the building.

There was a sense of pride in the school among staff and students. In my experience visiting many schools, when students, staff and volunteers make visitors feel welcome, and tell someone that the school is friendly and caring, I feel it is a positive sign. Teachers not involved in the formal part of the study spoke positively of the instructional supervision process. A kindergarten teacher I met in the office told me how much more she had learned about herself as a teacher after working through the supervision process. All of these indicators contributed to my view of GMES as a positive school environment.

Costal District High School (CDHS)

CDHS was a grade seven to 12 school with 340 students during the 2005-2006 school year and was in the Midlands Area. There were 19 full time equivalent teachers on staff, with a wide range of experience. The staff had several first year teachers and there were two teachers retiring at the end of June. The school operated on a semester system, as required in the Province. The timetables were slightly different for the junior high than for the senior high. Recesses and lunches were held at different times so the teachers had different lunch breaks depending on which grade levels they taught.

When I arrived at the school, I asked a student for directions and he offered to show me to the office. The principal greeted me at the office, took me to the staff room,

and then provided a tour of the school. In the rotunda, there was an art gallery area that was open and available to the students, although it contained several art pieces of significant value by well known artists. The art was in excellent condition (the principal could not remember any damage through vandalism that had occurred). On three occasions, as the walk around the school progressed, students opened doors for us. Later, I had the opportunity to be in the corridors prior to the bell, at recess, and during class changes. I talked to students and asked them questions about their school, the courses they were taking, and about extra-curricular activities. Students spoke positively about their school and answered my questions politely and openly.

The students I talked to were all significantly involved in the school and saw the school as a major part of their lives. Over the course of my days in the school, students I met were polite and friendly. Overall, I had the impression of an orderly atmosphere in a relaxed setting. Students seemed to take ownership of the school and were proud of its accomplishments. On one occasion, the school was preparing for a visit from the Lieutenant Governor of the province who was coming the next day to present awards for the whole district. A large number of staff and students seemed to be involved in the preparations.

A school handbook and a copy of the school's code of conduct expressed clear expectations for students, and outlined related procedures and processes. Eligibility for extra-curricular activities, attendance policy, smoking policy (including progressive sanctions), policy on fighting, and evaluation procedures were clearly stated. Eligibility for academic awards was also detailed. The CDHS Code of Conduct outlined expectations for student behaviour relating to participation in learning opportunities,

contribution to an orderly and safe learning environment, and respect for the rights of others. The Code described the school's position on bullying, then gave positive and negative consequences for specific behaviours.

Staff members at CDHS were welcoming to me. On my first break in the staffroom, I sat on the periphery and off to the side. The teachers (and other staff) sat at a table that was a focal point for the room, and a teacher got up, brought a chair over to the table, and insisted that I join the group. I asked if people had "their own" chairs, because I had been warned by someone once not to sit on someone's chair in the staffroom. They said that most did not, but they joked about one teacher who "had his chair". He had been in the school for over 30 years and had "rights" to that chair. We noted (with some humour) how people often sit in the same areas of rooms once they had sat there the first time. Conversations in the staff room seemed generally open and friendly.

The discussions I observed with and among staff members indicated that people were proud of the extra-curricular program of the school. On a number of occasions, teachers talked to me about how important the participation in activities outside the classroom was to students. They talked about monthly assemblies where contributions were noted and how the school tried to promote well-rounded citizens. Literature given to me indicated that the following sports were offered: basketball, soccer, skiing, track and field, orienteering, cross country, softball, cheerleading, golf, volleyball, and badminton. Other extra-curricular activities included student council, yearbook, dances, the prom, robotics, junior achievement, safe grad, drama, newspaper, student trips, and more.

Conversations with the principal indicated it was difficult to get people together for a staff meeting because so many staff members were engaged with extra-curricular activities. One staff member wanted me to see a robotics project that he and some students had been working on. In fact, well after school was out, there was still a group of staff and students working on the robot. It was reported on the radio a few days later that the school had won the provincial robotics competition.

Teachers commented on the comfort and the closeness of the school environment. One teacher said:

> I think in a small school like we have here, staff and students have a nice close knit little community right here where everyone knows everybody beyond the teaching level. It's personable; we can talk to one another and there's still a professional line, too. We might have a staff get-to-gather or something throughout the year but when we come back into the building we do have that level of professionalism and everyone seems to get along very well.

A first year teacher said:

> I feel really comfortable with the staff, I think we're good at communicating and I feel that if I have any issue I can go to my principal and say, 'okay, help me with this,' or 'I'm having this problem and I want to address it, what should I do?' Being a first year teacher, it's nice to know you have the support from the people in the office as well as the other people you're working with because in past experiences, even just being a student teacher, it's hard when you feel alienated from everybody else and I know it's different when you're only in the school for five weeks at a time, but I really feel comfortable here.

Students seemed to take ownership for the school by helping to prepare for various activities and through their high levels of participation in school activities. Students showed respect to me through using positive voice tone, opening doors, and being helpful when needed. They engaged in conversations with me willingly and answered my questions openly. From my experience in a high school setting, these indicators revealed that there were positive relationships between youth and adults in the

school. Staff members welcomed me and were proud of their school and what it offered to students. The school had an impressive list of extra-curricular offerings.

By spending time in the hallways and the gym, and in conversing with teachers and students throughout the school, I learned that noon hours and after school times were busy for teachers and students. In conversations with a number of teachers who were not interviewed, and with those who were, I sensed that they were proud of the extra-curricular involvement of the students at CDHS, and that they cared for students beyond the classroom.

The Respondents

Interviews involved the Superintendent, the Board Chair, the Director of Education Services, the Coordinator of Human Resources, an Area Supervisor, the two school principals, three teachers at GMES and four teachers at CDHS. Each is introduced below, starting with the Superintendent.

Greg, Superintendent of Schools, Midlands Regional School Board

Greg had been hired as Superintendent of the Midlands Regional School Board in October 2001. He retired at the end of June 2006.

Greg was well respected among his colleagues on the provincial scene (Other superintendents, personal communications, June 2006). He served on several committees on behalf of superintendents, including one to create and evaluate a request for proposals for superintendent performance appraisal, and one to commission a study on instructional time. In the months before MRSB was nominated for the study, Greg had been welcoming to me as a new superintendent to the group and as a person from another

province. He was supportive and open in sharing ideas and resources. In my judgment, Greg stood out in that regard in the group of superintendents.

Jane, Board Chair

Jane had been Board Chair for twelve years. She represented an area adjacent to the largest urban centre in the district. Jane worked in the health care field with seniors with disabilities. Jane was proud to be on the Board and felt positive about the staff and the work that was being done by the team in the Region:

> I feel very lucky being on this Board. I think we have some very dedicated staff and all of them with the best interests of students at heart. As long as we have very committed people and our goals and vision is the same it makes for a strong Board or strong team and I believe we have that.

Jane served on several Board committees including four standing committees and chair/vice chair/superintendent. She, or the vice chair of the Board, attended all Board committee meetings, and then they had a monthly meeting with the Superintendent to set priorities and to prepare for the Board meeting.

Dave, Director of Education Services

Dave had had a wide variety of experiences over a thirty four year career in education. Dave believed in the instructional supervision process, but had some concerns, and felt that the technical issues with it were not the problem. He said,

> You have to do some training, awareness level stuff, skills development with those key people in schools and central office to be able to implement it. That one is relatively easy; all that one requires is commitment and determination by the leadership of the system to do it. I can get resources from Human Resources and say we're going to set up time, commit some of our budget and we're going to do this, and people don't refuse to come. The hard part is getting people to action.

In 1996, after the systems amalgamated, Dave was an Area Supervisor for a group of schools that encompassed portions of the three pre-existing boards. There were five

areas and his was the only one that had schools from all three pre-existing boards. Five years previous, he became the Director of Education Services for MRSB.

Allan, Coordinator of Human Resources

Allan was a month away from the end of a long career in education with a variety of teaching and administrative experiences. Allan transferred into the Coordinator of Human Resources position in 1996, at the time of amalgamation, and was there until June 2006, when he retired.

After amalgamation, Allan had been charged with leading the initiative to develop a workable instructional supervision model for the system. He worked with a committee to develop the Personnel Performance Program, Instructional/Teacher, (PPP) which was the basis for the supervision program in the district. He felt the program was a positive one with many useful features. His comments were as follows:

> The strength is the process we have in place and clear rubrics, clear job descriptions, and how the rubrics flow from unsatisfactory to basic to proficient and distinguished – that's the real strength, so principals and teachers can really zero-in and see where they are. That's probably the biggest strength. The conciseness of the form, treating teachers as professionals and talking about their own professional development and growth.

Allan was knowledgeable about the PPP process. His knowledge of how the process was created was helpful to me in understanding the collaborative philosophy behind the PPP and the focus on professional development.

Susan, Area Supervisor

Susan had some different perspectives from some of the other respondents. She worked neither in the district office nor one of the schools, although she was considered district level personnel. She worked out of a sub-office located in her Area. She was

somewhat less positive about the instructional supervision process than some of the others in the study. When asked of her role in the process, she said:

> I'm responsible to go through that same process with principals and I have some difficulty with the process – we all have the same difficulty – because there's never enough time. It's always something that can be put on the 'back burner' because there are always things that have to be taken care of and so supervision is the one you have the most trouble, in terms of fitting it in. You really have to make an effort to do your supervision.

Susan had a strong background in instructional leadership and had extensive training on cooperative learning and other teaching strategies. She stated that she did not conduct the appraisals of the principals in her Area as often as she should but had put some work into developing a model where principals worked with each other as the basis of the Personnel Performance Program.

At the time of the study, Susan was Area Supervisor for the Central Area (where Green Meadows Elementary School was located).

Kate, Principal, Green Meadows Elementary School

Kate was in her fifth year as principal of GMES. Prior to going there she had been acting principal at another school on and off for a few years, and had been a teaching principal at a smaller school. She had completed one master of education degree and was just convocating with a second degree during the period of the study.

Kate had strong beliefs about the instructional supervision process and she felt it was closely linked to student learning:

> I think it's wonderful. I really do, because if you're going to look at student learning and, from what I've read, the single most influencing factor on how students achieve in student learning is the quality of the teacher. If we're not able to support our teachers then we're not going to have student learning to be the optimum level it needs to be. So the only way we have to do that is by acknowledging what teachers have in place. Because, if all teachers have different strengths, make them feel good about what they have but show them that

> learning is continuous and that we all need to be learning and growing and watching our students and what comes next and what can we do differently to support the different learnings in the classroom.

Kate was an advocate for instructional supervision that supported professional development and focused on student learning. In the interview with her Area Supervisor, I learned she was known for her effectiveness as an instructional leader by those in supervisory positions in the Region.

Bernard, Grade Six Teacher, GMES

Bernard started teaching with the district in 1985 and was in his 22nd year of teaching. His assignment had always been at the upper elementary, (grades four, five, and six) throughout his career, and he was teaching grade six during the 2005-2006 school year.

Kate felt Bernard had embraced the PPP process in such a manner that it had been a major influence on his professional growth. His goals were clearly stated and, in my discussions with him, he referred several times to the impact on student learning of the changes he had made through Kate's support and the PPP process. Bernard said, "I like change, I think after awhile we all need change." He said,

> I still have a number of years to go before retirement. But, as a teacher, I find myself growing every year. You know it changes. And like I said, change is fine for addressing the needs of the students – that's our job.

Bernard was enthusiastic about achieving the goals he had set through the instructional supervision process.

I found Bernard to be an enthusiastic teacher advocate for the instructional supervision process. He believed it had contributed to his professional growth and the

learning of his students. Bernard stood out from others interviewed in how closely he related the PPP process to the achievement of his students.

Fran, Grade Two Teacher, GMES

Fran worked toward a goal of improving her communication through the PPP process. She felt good about the progress she had made and the difference it was making for her as a teacher:

> My goal is on communication. I'm in the final year of my goal. It's because I felt there was a lack of quality communication between home and school. I find sometimes parents aren't comfortable in the school or in the classroom or communicating with the child's teacher or principal; so my goal was to improve the communication between home and school – more specifically, my classroom. It's worked very well, every year I've added on goals. It's worked well and now it's more-or-less just a habit. It happens naturally in my room and I think the parents feel really welcome and really comfortable.

Fran had been teaching for ten years in the same district. She taught grade two at GMES at the time of the study but had taught everything from primary to grade six. She took teacher training at the Provincial Teachers' College and she had recently finished a master of education degree through a university in the province. She had primarily been in elementary school and that was where she saw her future.

Jennifer, Grade Six Teacher, GMES

Jennifer was in her thirteenth year of teaching at the time of the study. She taught grade six during the 2005-2006 school year. Jennifer said she had had some excellent professional development opportunities and she had been identified as the lead teacher on staff in the area of literacy. She said,

> I got to be on a lead team of teachers where we went and we were trained with the first Provincial Oral Reading Record Assessment binder for Grades three to six across the Province. So, I was trained in how to use the pieces in the binder and trained to show teachers and then I had an opportunity to present a number of

> workshops to teachers showing them the binder, showing them the oral reading records, showing them how to assess how some one does on an oral reading record and that sort of thing. For me, not only did I get to learn a lot but I also had the opportunity to share with other teachers which is a really good development opportunity.

Jennifer's work on instructional supervision through the PPP allowed her to tie into the work she did as a lead teacher, and therefore it was relevant to her on a personal and professional level.

Helga, Principal, Coastal District High School

Helga had been principal of CDHS for four consecutive years at the time of the study. Prior to that, she had served some terms as acting principal and had been vice principal for 12 years. She had a master of education degree and, similar to Kate, was completing a second master of education degree during the 2005-2006 school year.

Helga had some beliefs about instructional leadership that she shared:

> I believe it's my responsibility to make sure that I'm around, that I'm visible to teachers, available to teachers, that I'm visible to students…I want teachers to feel free that they can come in and talk to me at any time, and students as well. I'm a go between for the teacher and student. But, I see myself as a role model to students, teachers. I think when you're talking instructional leadership, everything that goes on inside the school lands on the shoulders of the principal and the principal should be open to everything – community involvement, liaising with the community.

Helga believed in the concept of the principal as instructional leader and had a broad view of supervisory behaviour. I was impressed by how well she knew her teachers and how much effort she made to be out-and-about in the school. Her routine of picking up the attendance information from the teachers in their classrooms gave her the opportunity to touch base with each teacher daily. This routine was referred to positively by the teachers.

Sylvia, Guidance Counselor, Family Studies (Home Economics) and PDR (Health) Teacher, CDHS

Sylvia had been at CDHS for 11 years. She had 11 total years of teaching and said this about her life before coming to CDHS,

> I was a parent at home for the first part of my career and waited until my children were all of an age to be in school, so eleven years. I started here as a teacher's aide because that was a position that was open, then became a substitute and then long-term.

The classes she taught during the 2005-2006 school year were PDR: grades seven, eight and nine; and family studies: grades seven, eight and nine.

Ellen, Art Teacher, CDHS

Ellen had been teaching since 1980. She had a bachelor of fine arts and a teaching diploma from out of the province. Ellen took her role as grade seven to 12 art teacher seriously and she saw a strong connection with the community through her principal. She said,

> …the community plays a part in her understanding of a teacher or program's effectiveness. Our school principal is often approached by community members who wish to see our students, through the guidance of teachers, take on art contests, logo competitions, sports competitions, math competitions, etc. The successes and accomplishments of our students are visible in local, regional, provincial, and national communities.

Ellen believed that she was judged as a teacher on all her interactions with students and the community.

Meagan, English Teacher, CDHS

Meagan was a "brand new teacher" in high school English (grades ten, 11 and 12). She had graduated the previous May with a bachelor of education degree from a university within the province. Meagan said, "It's a very interesting time for me…I'm a fresh, new face to the teaching experience, I'm learning as I go".

Meagan was born and raised in Coastal District and attended all her elementary and secondary schooling there. In describing coming back to her former high school to teach, she said,

> I grew up in Coastal District. I went to this high school. I'm working with people who used to teach me, so there's some sort of comfort level there. That could be why I feel so welcome and at home in this school. In the beginning I thought it would be weird to come back and teach with the people that taught me. I thought, 'Oh my goodness how am I ever going to be able to call them by their first names? or "What will they think of me?' but so far, I feel totally welcome and it's been a positive experience.

Meagan was a first year teacher who was anxious for feedback from her colleagues and her principal to help her improve as a teacher.

Brian, Technical Education Teacher, CDHS

Brian was a technical education (industrial arts and computer) teacher at CDHS. He had worked in the private sector before he had become a teacher. He believed that teachers had to be held accountable and should expect supervision.

> I worked a lot in the private sector and I found that where I worked on construction or what have you, people were always evaluating me there and if I wasn't doing my job then they would recommend or order you to do it a certain way. So I think you have to have that supervision of that level at the school to make people accountable for their job.

Brian was about ten years into his career. He was proud of his relationships with students and his involvement with extra-curricular activities.

Summary

There were 14 respondents involved in the study from one school district: five district level personnel, two principals and seven teachers. The school-based personnel were from two schools. The respondents had a wide range of experience and training.

They were cooperative in sharing details of their careers with me in the context of the interviews.

The Findings

This study focused on the expressed vision of a school district, as meta-policy, and the relationship of the vision to day-to-day teacher supervision practices, or policy-in-experience. To this end, the findings of this study are presented along the following lines, based upon the key questions of the study, namely:

1. What is the expressed vision of the system?
2. What are individuals' perceptions of the vision?
3. What is the expressed supervisory policy of the system?
4. What is the relationship between the policy and system vision?
5. How is the supervisory policy of the system operationalized?
6. What are the experiences of individuals with the supervisory activity of the system?
7. How are these supervisory experiences related to the vision of the system?

Meta-policy: Expressed Vision of the District

In this section, I present the expressed vision of the system and interpretations are described. For the purposes of this study, mission/vision was viewed as meta-policy, given its influence over all policies of the Board.

The Expressed Vision of the Board

The formal mission/vision of the Region had been articulated by the Board as follows:

> The Midlands Regional School Board is a diverse, progressive, student-centered learning community. We are committed to developing creative, confident and

> responsible global citizens who take pride in their local community, culture and heritage. We will inspire our learning community by enriching the quality of educational opportunities in a safe and supportive learning environment with high expectations for all. (Regional School Board Website, Retrieved on July 2, 2006)

The mission/vision of the Board had been created by the Board to be reviewed periodically. Jane, Board Chair, said, "We developed it as a Board together and we had focus groups and came together as one big group to come up with the vision." She went on to say, "Periodically, we review it to see if the vision is still where we're at or if we've moved or changed direction slightly." She said the reviews had been conducted in conjunction with a facilitator, but they had not changed the vision very much and it had stayed basically the same since the process to create it after the 1995 amalgamation. The latest version of the vision had been adopted in 2003.

The Elements of the Vision

When examining the mission/vision of MRSB, it could be broken into six elements. They were:

- student-centred learning community
- a safe and supportive learning environment
- developing creative, confident and responsible global citizens
- pride in local community, culture and heritage
- enriching the quality of educational opportunities
- high expectations for all.

The elements of the vision were specifically stated in the mission/vision of the Board. They have been used to help me draw out relationships throughout the chapter.

The Interpretations of the Vision

There were a wide variety of interpretations of the mission/vision of MRSB. Every respondent had something to say when asked about the vision of the Board. I will examine the interpretations of the vision by *District Level Personnel*, *the Principals,* and *the Teachers*.

District level personnel interpretation of the vision. When asked what the mission/vision of the Board was, Greg, the Superintendent, spoke of "high expectations and excellence of performance". He said,

> I think the vision I've tried to promote, and I think the Board embraces; here I want to go beyond that wordy mission statement that everybody has. I think what I've tried to promote is the notion of excellence: that every job function brings or should bring an expectation for excellence. Also, I've connected that with every job function having something to do with educating children, youth, and adults.

Greg's answer had little wording that matched the formal written mission statement. He used the opportunity to paraphrase and summarize and place the mission in the context of "excellence" as an outcome. He tied his vision to teacher supervision and the efforts for all employees to do better at their jobs so that students would benefit. "Let's go for excellence," was his succinct summary of the mission. While his comments did not pick up the wording of the formal mission/vision statement, they reflected a theme of the mission on high expectations and linked it to the supervisory practices. He offered the following,: "No matter how excellent you are in your job function today, you can always do better. So let's push forward with that as the vision for the Region." These comments seemed to be related to how the vision had been translated into action in the district. Greg was charged by the Board with implementing policy, so how he framed

the vision, and various policies, should have had an impact on the system. Greg believed there was a clear relationship between the mission and supervisory practices.

Dave, the Director of Education Services, stated the vision as:

> The vision of Midlands Regional School Board, in my mind, boils down to this, 'maximize individual student learning'. I usually frame it with those four words, and I've done that for some time.

He also mentioned the elements of focusing on student learning and global learning, but his summary at the beginning and the end of the portion of the interview on the mission focused on individual student learning. Dave was not quoting directly from the mission/vision, but seemed to be framing it in a manner he believed was practical and workable.

The Superintendent and Director of Education Services both paraphrased and drew the mission/vision down to a few words. Perhaps this succinct summarization was related to the need to focus on the big picture at their level and to keep a clear picture in their minds of what they were working toward and striving to achieve. Susan, Area Supervisor, captured this notion when she said, "Is it important? Yes, vision is important, but I think it has to be practical or one forgets it." This speaks to the need to make the vision practical and workable. My experience supports Susan's point: the vision has to be practical to be useful.

Susan took a slightly facetious tone when answering my question about the vision of the Board.

> The apple pie version is students are at the centre and everything we do is for students, and we promote so-called, life-long learning. We keep students as our focus at all times and so our vision is what we strive to attain.

Susan mentioned the element of having students at the centre. She seemed to care about student learning in her area.

Jane, Board Chair, said,

> The vision is to provide a relevant education to the students in the System and to have them have a global perspective when they leave the System. Global citizens, I guess, and to have a safe learning environment for all.

Jane addressed the elements of global citizens and a safe learning environment.

Allan, Coordinator of Human Resources, summarized the vision as follows: "I would it summarize it as doing what's best for students and being student-centered." Allan mentioned the element of being student-centered.

Greg, Superintendent, was the only respondent who made allusion to high expectations, although he did not directly use this language. In addition to the comments I quoted previously he said,

> So, if there's a vision I'm trying to promote, or we have tried to promote as a Board, it is one of seeking excellence and trying to achieve it. I hate to use the phrase 'raising the bar' but that's what it amounts to.

Greg's interpretation of the vision was centred on the concept of "excellence" which I have interpreted to mean that high expectations are important to him. He suggested this when he said he wanted to "raise the bar" for employees.

The principals' interpretation of the vision. The principals of the schools stated their impression of the vision in different terms, but both connected it to the learning of students. Kate said, "I think the vision speaks clearly to the fact that we need to have people on board if we are going to support the learning of our students." She linked her comments to an environment where professional development was fostered and school was a safe place "…to take risks and be supported." Helga related the vision to

supporting students “to find a way they can succeed” and “educating our students to the best of their ability”.

Kate, GMES principal, indirectly alluded to the concept of a student centred learning community when she stated, “I think that the vision clearly speaks to the fact that we need to have all people on board if we are going to support the learning of our children”. “Having all people on board” “to support the learning of our children” could be interpreted as working toward a student centred learning community. Helga, CDHS principal, had a slightly different take on the vision of the Board, “My understanding is that we are entrusted to be educating our students to the best of their ability.” She also said, “…we as teachers (should) educate all children in the best way they can learn…”

Teachers’ interpretation of the vision. Four teachers, one at GMES and three at CDHS, spoke in our interviews of student centered learning in some fashion. The mission refers to a “student centred learning community”.

Brian’s answer was the most direct. This teacher at CDHS said, “Student centred learning community,” when asked about the vision of the Board. Meagan’s answer was a little longer and she framed her comments in light of her teaching responsibilities:

> So I think that it’s basically student-centred learning, like having appropriate materials for the students so they can grow instead of just the teacher-centered learning kind - up in front of the classroom lecturing all the time. Getting the students involved, that’s where I see it as very inclusive, very student-centered.

Ellen, from CDHS, and Jennifer, from GMES, also mentioned this element in their answers.

Five of the seven teachers interviewed, two at GMES and three at CDHS, spoke of a safe learning environment in their description of the vision of the MRSB. There was

a direct reference to a safe learning environment in the mission/vision. The following are comments from teachers when they were asked to describe the vision of the Board as they related to the element in the vision of a safe learning environment.

> Ellen: "Right off the bat I think safe learning environment; one where all students can come to learn."
>
> Bernard: "Well, I would say the vision is to create a safe, caring environment where students don't feel threatened. Students feel, as individuals, that they're important and that they feel comfortable, that they feel safe. As adults or students if you feel comfortable then you're able to take in more, learn more, be happier."
>
> Brian: "We support a safe, supportive learning environment…"
>
> Meagan: "We want to include everyone, especially with English is where I'm at and making sure that students are literate and at a comfort level where they can learn."
>
> Fran: "I think that my understanding of the vision would be that all schools provide a safe and caring and supportive place for each child to come and learn."

A safe learning environment was the most commonly mentioned element by the teachers.

Ellen, from CDHS, was the only teacher to mention the element of developing global citizens. She said,

> It's all inclusive; realizing that many methods of teaching and tools are required in order for our students to be successful, productive, knowledgeable, global citizens.

Two teachers mentioned the concept of enriching learning opportunities, but they did not use that specific language. They were both from CDHS. Meagan said,

> We want to include everyone… with materials that aren't too difficult for them so they can actually grasp the concepts…like having appropriate materials for the students so they can grow.

Sylvia contributed,

> My understanding is every student is an individual, that our role is to bring every one of those individuals to their greatest achievement whether it be through academics or sports or through leadership; but each one of those areas is

> important; each one in different ways to every child. So our goal is to help students reach those goals that they set within the parameters of the school.

The comments on enriching the learning opportunities focused on helping each student succeed. These teachers interpreted the vision, at least partially, as doing what was necessary to help each student learn by enriching his or her individual learning opportunities.

None of the teachers mentioned the element of high expectations or pride in community. These elements did not occur to the teachers when asked about the vision.

Summary

Figure 7 helps to summarize the elements of the vision mentioned by the respondents when they were asked to articulate the vision of the Board. The most commonly mentioned element was student-centred learning. Both principals mentioned this element. There were an equivalent number of district level personnel and teachers that included it in their responses.

Five teachers identified the element of a “safe learning environment” whereas only one person from the district, the Board Chair, mentioned this element. That was a significant difference between teachers and others who were interviewed.

Two out of five respondents from the district level mentioned the element of “global citizens” while only one of seven teachers (Ellen, from CDHS) and no principals identified this element.

Three respondents from CDHS, two teachers and Helga, mentioned the concept of enriching learning opportunities. No one from GMES or from the district office brought up this element. Only the Superintendent referred to “high expectations”.

	Global Citizens	Safe Positive Environment	Enriching Opportunities	Student Centred	High Expectations	Pride in Heritage
District Level Personnel						
Superintendent (Greg)					X	
Board Chair (Jane)	X	X				
Director of Education (Dave)	X			X		
Coordinator of HR (Allan)				X		
F of S Supervisor (Susan)				X		
School Level Personnel						
GMES						
Principal (Kate)		X		X		
Teachers						
Bernard		X				
Fran		X				
Jennifer				X		
CDHS						
Principal (Helga)			X	X		
Teachers						
Sylvia			X			
Brian		X		X		
Ellen	X	X		X		
Meagan		X	X	X		

Figure 7. The interpreted elements of the vision.

There apparently was not a great deal of clarity among all respondents around the vision. Only Ellen and Meagan had three elements of the six identified elements of the vision in their answers. Five respondents identified two and six noted one. Everyone answered freely and openly and gave their interpretations, which seemed to indicate that they had a clear impression of the beliefs of the Board.

The Board Policy: The Policy-in-intention

The Midlands Regional School Board had a policy on Personnel Performance. It is presented in Figure 8. The policy stated that the Board was committed to excellence in education and that excellence was dependent on the quality of work of the people employed by the Board. It recognized that in the Education Act of the Province the Board was required to conduct, or cause to be conducted, an annual appraisal of job performance when the policy said, "The Board recognizes the need to support and hold accountable its staff in their continuing growth, development and provision of service to children."

Midlands

REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD

POLICY #MS-HR-08

PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE

[BOARD MINUTE #09-99, Page 7]

The Midlands Regional School Board is committed to excellence in education.

Furthermore, the Board recognizes that excellence is, in large part, dependent upon the "quality of work" evident in the day-to-day performance of those persons employed to provide leadership, instruction and/or support services within the regional education system.

The Board has the responsibility (per Education Act, Section 39(2)(b)) to conduct, or cause to be conducted, an annual appraisal of personnel job performance. Accordingly, the Board recognizes the need to support and hold accountable its staff in their continuing growth, development and provision of service to children.

To this end, the Board expects the Superintendent of Schools (or designate) to develop, implement and monitor the practices and procedures described in the M.R.S.B. document, **Personnel Performance Program** such that:

- students attending Regional schools receive the highest quality education and service;
- all employees are involved with performance appraisal on a regularly scheduled basis;
- all employees are held accountable for meeting established performance expectations;
- continual growth and development of personnel effectiveness is a regional priority and a shared responsibility involving both the Board and the employee;
- the Personnel Performance Program involves staff in a co-operative, constructive, continuous process which takes place in an atmosphere of fairness, trust and mutual respect;
- all staff work together to promote professional growth and development and to enhance employee effectiveness; and,
- employees who are not meeting established performance expectations are provided additional supervision, assistance and a reasonable time for improvement.

Figure 8. MRSB personnel performance policy.

District Level Interpretations of the Policy

The Board expected the Superintendent of Schools to implement the practices and procedures outlined in the MRSB document on supervision of staff. It was my impression from discussions with the Superintendent, the Director of Education Services, and the Coordinator of Human Resources that there was a professional development focus in how the policy was interpreted.

The Superintendent took his responsibilities seriously in this area and saw himself and the Board as role models for the system. He felt it was important for the Board to conduct its annual appraisal of him and of itself, and for him to conduct appraisals of those who reported to him, in order to set an appropriate tone for the district. He explained his role in instructional supervision as follows:

> I'll start with the expectation and it's back to this theme of excellence and as I mentioned earlier, this, for me, ties very closely to implementing that expectation. I did convince the Board they had to really lead the way or together we would lead the way. It was very important from my point-of-view that not only because it's in the Act but because it's important for the System to see that they would evaluate the Superintendent annually and that it would be reported on publicly – may be the very basics of the outcome, at least it's in the record or in the minutes and in the press – probably, that this had taken place.
>
> After they had done that for a couple of years I also pushed them to engage in at least a self-evaluation so they would be seen to be evaluating themselves. I think we did set that tone and then I assure that I definitely do (appraise) the directors. Annually that's done and then it just **c**ascades. But I don't want any breaks in the chain. I think it was important to set the tone from the top on this, not expecting the principals to carry it out and then stop at the supervisor. It's got to be seen to be done and that's why to me it's extremely critical that HR does ride herd on the results. So, they're getting kind of antsy because the expectation is there according to the policy, about how often and under what conditions.
>
> In the end I would be asking HR and the Director of Education to give me a summary for the year. I'm not there to finger point and there may be all kinds of reasons why the policy demands or guidelines have not been met but I think the support and the pressure have to be there on this or it can drift away and be taken over by other things.

In the context of ensuring that instructional supervision occurred, Greg mentioned pressure and support. He spoke of the important role of the Hunan Resources Department in ensuring that appraisals occurred through putting some pressure on principals. He also identified the Director of Education Services who would follow-up with the Area Supervisors to ensure that the immediate supervisors of principals were working with them to assure the process was completed.

Performance Appraisal, according to the policy, was to be conducted such that: the highest quality of education and service for students were ensured; all employees were involved in it on a regular basis; all employees were held accountable for meeting performance expectations; continual growth and development was fostered; the process was a co-operative, constructive process which took place in an atmosphere of fairness, trust and mutual respect; everyone worked together to promote professional growth and development; and employees not meeting expectations were provided additional supervision, assistance and a reasonable time for improvement. (Board Policy #M-HR-08)

In this part of Canada and in MRSB, the term “performance appraisal” was almost always used. It has not become apparent to me why this usage was emphasized, although some people believe it was related to a business model to which a number of directors of human resources had been exposed at some point. The term “formative appraisal” seemed to correspond with the term “supervision” and “summative appraisal” with evaluation. The focus of this research was on instructional supervision so “formative appraisal” is the process that received most of the attention in this analysis. However, it

has been difficult to separate it entirely from "summative appraisal" because these two activities were different parts of the same process.

Policy-in-action: The Vehicle for Action

Each section of the Human Resources Department of the MRSB had created a "Personnel Performance Program" (Board Policy #M-HR-08), as suggested by Board policy. The program created for the teaching staff was developed under the authority of the Superintendent of Schools and the process of development was headed up by the Coordinator of Human Resources. The program became the administrative procedures for implementing the Board's policy on Personnel Performance.

A Retrospective: Developing the Supervisory Program

The interview with the Coordinator of Human Resources was instructive as to how the program was created. I sensed from Allan during the interview that he was proud of his work on this file and that he had considerable ownership for the process that had grown from his work. The document was an extensive one (see Appendix B) and it outlined a process for performance appraisal with the intent of meeting the mandate of the Education Act to provide annual appraisals. It recognized that most teachers were highly competent individuals who were doing a good job. Allan's description of the administrative procedures (policy-in-action) was as follows:

> The policy itself centred around the Education Act for the Department of Education which said that all staff had to be supervised yearly. We, in the Human Resources Department, the Director of the time B.M., the other Coordinator and myself, tried to figure out how we would do that; what we basically came up with is we divided the Board into three basic sections: one where we set up a committee to look at evaluation of our teachers; and one to look at our evaluation of our (provincial) GEU, CUPE and non-union employees; and another to look at administrators. Because I worked mainly with teacher union (employees), I worked with the teacher union committee.

> We had an external facilitator with us, who worked with the three of us in helping us put together the final booklets and keeping us on track as to where we were going with the program for evaluation. One of the things that we realized from the beginning was that we could not evaluate every teacher within the Region on a yearly basis and still do a good job.
>
> So we came up with a program, working with our different committees, recognizing that most of our staff were excellent teachers and very good teachers, where we would spread the evaluation over a four-year period with an annual report each year. In that way we would capture the essence of the Department of Education's mandate that we evaluate everybody.

Allan indicated that there had been attention paid to the mandate of the Department which was to conduct an evaluation of each staff member every year. He noted that the committee had taken what it considered to be a reasonable approach, which required an preliminary appraisal every four years and an annual monitoring update.

> We came up with a preliminary appraisal form within our committee, based on rubrics, where every four years a preliminary appraisal is done with the teacher, both permanent contract and term, and from there the principal would decide whether teachers would be put on a professional track or a more goal-directed formal track. It's been our experience, because there were a number of administrators on our committee, that most teachers would end up on the professional development track and could set up their goals from the point-of-view of professional development in line with school improvement goals and board goals over a four-year period with an annual report in April. That was the general philosophy and that's how it worked.

Representatives from all the counties in the district were appointed to the committee with a mix of principals, vice principals, teachers, and union representatives. They were conscious of gender balance when the committee was struck. The Superintendent was an ex-officio member of the committee and was supportive of its ongoing work, over the three year process of development. Allan's description of the committee process was as follows:

> They knew they had to come up with a format to create a program that was user-friendly, we knew it would take time, but what we tried to do was cut down the amount of time by creating forms that worked. We came up with a process, based

> on some of McGreal's work and Danielson's work, a format where we knew that teachers were good teachers; we were looking at professional development tracks. We looked at the types of rubrics they had and decided to base our System on the preliminary appraisal report based on 14 rubrics which are job responsibilities which became part of all the teachers' job description.
>
> We developed job descriptions for elementary, middle school, and high school; they essentially had the same for the most part, but some subtle differences. The hard part was trying to get the essential components of the job description into 14 or a reasonable amount because we could go on forever on what teachers do, but we think we captured the essence of it and once we had the job responsibilities and were comfortable with that as a group (because we came from many different levels in the Board) we started building our rubrics and we worked a long, long time at that and we word-smithed that to death.
>
> We built the rubrics based on the job responsibilities; if you look at our rubrics you'll see they go in a natural sequence from the terms we used in order to describe a teacher's performance from unsatisfactory to basic, to proficient, to distinguished. They have a natural flow from each one of them.
>
> We wanted to make it as easy and as comfortable for administrators to use so that took an awful long time. At the same time, we continued to consult with the Teachers' Union in all three locals, meeting with them regularly and we also set it up as a pilot project once we were done, to test it in some schools. Then we'd go back and meet with the teachers to see how they felt about it. So it took a three year period.
>
> We started from the job descriptions and the basics. Our committee was continuing to meet, as well as meeting with the other committees, word-smithing our document at the same time, and making sure our committees were comfortable with the document. We started with the job descriptions which contained the 14 essential elements and then developed the rubrics from that, then developed the forms after those were all done. That was essentially the process; it did take a long time but, in the end, the product was worth it.

The process that created the Personnel Performance Program, Instructional/Teacher (the PPP), was long (three years), thorough, and collaborative. The timeline of three years and the amount of feedback and collaboration led me to believe that the process had been taken seriously and that consensus was sought among all partners in the endeavour.

The Personnel Performance Program Described

The Personnel Performance Program, Instructional/Teacher (PPP) was intended to ensure: "the job performance of those in instructional/teacher positions is consistent with established performance expectations" and "instructional staff are committed to professional growth and development". The professional development component of this seemed to be the focus of most of the energy in the schools. The first step in the process was the "preliminary appraisal process".

The preliminary appraisal process. The PPP process started with a preliminary appraisal process where a teacher and his/her immediate supervisor met to discuss the process of appraisal and the 14 job performance responsibilities and job descriptions created by the committee. After the meeting, the principal observed the teacher in the performance of his or duties. The teacher and the supervisor then met to discuss the performance responsibilities again. A rating of *distinguished, proficient, basic,* or *unsatisfactory* was assigned according to specific rubrics outlined in the PPP document based on each of the performance responsibilities. The performance responsibilities were as follows:

1. Demonstrates required knowledge of curriculum and program.
2. Provides and follows course outline and course objectives.
3. Demonstrates an ability to use a variety of methods to assess *Student Learning Outcomes*.
4. Demonstrates use of current instructional strategies.
5. Strives to meet the individual needs, interests, and abilities of the students.
6. Encourages students to develop as independent life-long learners.
7. Creates a classroom environment that is conducive to learning.
8. Prepares for assigned classes.
9. Assists the administration in implementing all policies and rules governing student life and conduct.
10. Maintains accurate, complete records as required by law, district policy, and administrative regulation.
11. Attends scheduled staff and department meetings.
12. Communicates regularly with parents (guardians) and students regarding student learning and progress.

13. Treats students and colleagues in a respectful manner.
14. Maintains and continues to improve professional competence.

After the rating process had been completed the supervisor (principal) assigned the teacher to one of two tracks for appraisal. These types of appraisal are described below.

Professional development appraisal process. In the professional development appraisal process, goals were established collaboratively by the principal and teacher, based on the rating conducted on the performance responsibilities. The teacher worked toward the achievement of those goals for up to four years. There were forms that were to be completed by the teacher and the principal annually about the progress toward the goals. Principals were to have "ad hoc" contact with teachers over the course of the school year related to the goals.

Formal appraisal process. If the teacher was on the formal appraisal process, the goals may or may not have been set collaboratively, were more closely monitored, and were assessed over a one year period. All probationary (non-tenured) and term teachers were placed automatically on the formal track. Teachers who had a permanent contract but "where job performance is not consistent with established job expectations" were also to have been put on the formal appraisal process.

There was another appraisal track called the "*intensive appraisal process*" that was not connected the preliminary performance appraisal.

The intensive appraisal process. The intensive appraisal process was to be "used with an employee who is experiencing specific and significant difficulty in meeting established performance expectations; and/or, an employee whose overall job performance is considered below minimum standards". Intensive appraisal, I believe, would correspond

with “evaluation” while the other two kinds of appraisal would be more consistent with supervision.

In summary, the policy-in-action for the Midlands Regional School Board on instructional supervision was the PPP. This process was a detailed administrative procedure document, leading to a collaborative appraisal process, which had a professional development orientation. At the time of its creation, it had broad-based support within the system. The process had different tracks that could fulfill the needs of the system and school-based administrators.

Analysis: From Vision to Policy-in-action

The expressed vision of the Board was important to the Board. Board Chair Jane said that the Board had reviewed the mission/vision several times since it was created after amalgamation in 1995. She said that it had basically remained the same, with minor tinkering. They had reaffirmed the mission/vision in its latest form in 2003.

I believe vision to be a broad statement of principles and belief that, according to the definition used for the purpose of this study, offers shared pictures of the future (Senge, 1990), is the criterion against which all behaviour within an organization is measured (Belasco & Stayer, 1993), and which emerges from the collective views of a variety of sources (Fullan, 1997). To begin to understand how the vision may have been actualized, several connections were observed.

The Board had a vision which I have suggested had six elements:

- a student-centred learning community
- a safe and supportive learning environment
- developing creative, confident and responsible global citizens

- pride in local community, culture and heritage
- enriching the quality of educational opportunities
- high expectations for all.

I have examined the relationship of these elements to the formal policy (the policy-in-intent) and to the administrative procedures, the Personnel Performance Program, Instructional/Teachers (PPP) (the policy-in-action).

The Vision and the Policy

The formal policy of the Board on personnel performance stated that the Board was "committed to excellence in education". It recognized that excellence was dependent on the "quality of work" of employees in the district. The policy charged the Superintendent with the task of implementing the MRSB document: the PPP. He was to implement the PPP such that: (a) there was the highest quality education and service, (b) there were regular appraisals, (c) there was accountability, (d) continual growth and development was a shared responsibility between the Board and the employee, (e) the process took place in an atmosphere of fairness, trust and mutual respect, (f) professional growth and development were promoted and, (g) employees not meeting expectations were provided additional support and time for improvement.

The element of the vision on high expectations was directly related to the commitment to excellence in the policy. The Board used the element as an overriding statement at the top of the policy and set the tone for the other statements in the policy. Other than the element on high expectations, it was difficult to draw a further formal connection with the elements of the vision. It seemed to me that it was important to look more closely at the PPP than at the policy to see how the vision had been actualized. The

fact that the policy specifically charged the Superintendent with implementing the PPP led me to believe that I should examine in detail the relationship between the vision and the PPP. The Board, through its statement in the policy, clearly saw the PPP as its mechanism for implementation of its philosophy and beliefs in personnel supervision. The principles that are stated as the basis of the PPP were taken directly from the policy on performance appraisal.

The Vision and the PPP

The Personnel Performance Program, Instructional/Teacher (see Appendix B) was the administrative procedures and the policy-in-action of the MRSB to implement instructional supervision in the district. I described the process in an earlier section of this chapter, but it is important to examine how the PPP process was related to the vision. There were six elements of the vision that I identified and these elements seemed to relate to the PPP in a number of ways, but there seemed to be some gaps, or incongruencies between it and the vision. I chose to examine the connection of the vision to the PPP through the performance responsibilities, as they appeared to define an effective link to the expectations for teachers. This relationship is profiled in Figure 9.

The PPP identified 14 performance expectations for teachers. The commonalities between elements of the vision and the performance expectations have been examined. I have dealt with each element of the vision in turn.

1. Safe and positive learning environment. The element of the vision about a safe and positive learning environment was the most directly related to the stated performance responsibilities. Item nine from the performance responsibilities stated: “creates a classroom environment that is conducive to learning,” and item 13 stated teachers should

"treat students…in a respectful manner". Both of these segments seemed to be related to a safe and positive learning environment.

Elements of the Vision	Performance Responsibilities from the PPP
Student-Centred (Learning Community)	• Attends scheduled staff and department meetings. • Communicates regularly with parents (guardians) and students regarding student learning and progress. • Treats students and colleagues in a respectful manner. • Encourages students to develop as independent life-long learners
Safe Positive Environment	• Creates a classroom environment that is conducive to learning • Treats students and colleagues in a respectful manner.
Enriching Opportunities	• Strives to meet individual needs, interests, and abilities of the students.
High Expectations	• Stating responsibilities implies expectations • Maintains and continues to improve professional competence
Global Citizens	• No clear match.
Pride in Heritage	• No clear match.

Figure 9. The vision and the PPP.

2. *Student-centred learning*. I believe the element of the vision on creating a student-centred learning community was directly related to attending meetings with colleagues, communicating with parents, and treating students and colleagues in a respectful manner. It could also be related to encouraging students to develop as life-long learners. It seems that the vision was carried into the policy through this element.

3. *Enriched opportunities*. "Enriching learning opportunities for all" from the vision was verbalized in the performance responsibilities through item five which stated: a teacher "strives to meet the individual needs, interests and abilities of the students". This provided encouragement and direction for the individualization of programs and instruction.

4. *Global citizens*. There seemed to be nothing in the performance responsibilities regarding creating global citizens. However, I should add that I have not done an exhaustive study of the curriculum of the Province, and that the performance responsibilities required the teacher to "follow course outlines and course objectives". Thus the outcomes of individual courses and the overall curriculum could have been related to creating global citizens.

5. *High expectations*. The general message of the list of performance responsibilities was one of high expectations for teachers. Each one of the items was an expectation, and the fact that they were stated in policy and procedures implied seriousness of intent. Item 14, "Maintains and continues to improve performance competence", seemed directly related to high expectations for teachers and their growth and development.

6. *Pride in heritage*. The element of the vision on "pride in local community, culture and heritage" was not reflected in the performance responsibilities as I interpreted them. I think that lack of reference to this element was a fairly obvious omission and should have been addressed, given the vision of the Board. By not having a performance responsibility in this area, the performance responsibilities did not reinforce the need for teachers to address racial equity or social justice issues or to recognize the cultural differences of their students.

In summary, four of the six elements of the mission/vision were reflected in the performance responsibilities for teachers expressed in the PPP; some elements more directly than others. Two of the elements of the vision: global citizens and pride in heritage, were not reflected in the performance responsibilities, and this omission appeared to be a gap in translating the vision into policy, and consequently into action.

Policy-in-experience

There are two questions which arise related to this section. The questions are related to the research question "What are the experiences of individuals with the supervisory activity of the system?" and are as follows: *(a) How does the practice of instructional supervision relate to the formal policy that is in place? (b) What do the teachers, school-based administrators and school system administrators see as the strengths and weaknesses of the supervision process in their system?* These questions were explored through the interviews that occurred at the school sites and the observations (with field notes) that were undertaken. Studying policy-in-experience meant studying the perceptions of what was actually happening concerning instructional supervision in the schools and in the classrooms.

I conducted the examination of policy-in-experience by soliciting the views of the participants in the study. To describe the practice of instructional supervision related to the formal policy that was in place, the perceptions of the teachers and the principals were sought and have been shared for each of the schools, in turn. Observations of supervisory interactions were conducted and have been reported along with data from the interviews. The strengths and weaknesses of the process were addressed by examining the interviews and observations from the schools as well as data from interviews with district level personnel. Both school-based and district-based perspectives were sought.

Teachers and principals saw instructional supervision and the Personnel Performance Program (PPP) from a variety of perspectives. Policy-in-experience regarding instructional supervision seemed to be a matter of individual perception. I

believe that teachers perceived the supervision process through the lens of the experiences they had with it.

Supervision-in-experience at Green Meadows Elementary School

I have outlined the perspectives and experiences of the principal of Green Meadows Elementary School, followed by those of the teachers. A supervisory interaction has been described.

Kate's experience. Kate, GMES principal, had prepared a binder for each teacher with 14 sections based on the performance responsibilities for teachers from the PPP. She said the binders were to be used to collect information and artifacts on the teacher skills and could build into a portfolio over time. From her tone during our interactions, it seemed that Kate took professional pride in the fact that she had been able to add something to the PPP process to help her staff engage in it more fully as a professional development experience. Kate said that all teachers in the school were involved in the PPP process and all the teachers reiterated that fact. Here was Kate's description of instructional supervision in GMES:

> Well, it's mandated by our Board. We do use the model, the "PPP", and currently all staff are on board at some level – a year within the cycle. Our part-time teachers go through the appraisal every year so some of those part-time people are people who return. For example, a job-share person will be back in our school every year and we do have some flexibility with that; if you have staff returning on a part-time basis, you can move them into the formal without going through the preliminary piece every year. But, typically, part-time people go through that every year: making a one-year goal and strategies that would reflect that time frame so those people are part of a yearly supervision plan.
>
> That looks somewhat the same for teachers who are permanent on staff once they go through that preliminary appraisal, 25% of your staff, that's how the model was implemented. Then, all of but one of my staff at this time, are on a PD plan. So, they've set goals that will last for a three year period and each year they identify a strategy specific to that one time frame. We meet in the Fall and review where they were at the end of the year before, talk about what the next step might

> be for them, and develop their strategy and, depending on what they are, determine my level of on-going contact and then in February – January/February – what I do is plan an up-date meeting with those teachers just to say, how's it going and where are your challenges and where can I support you. Then we meet at the end of the year.
>
> Our Board asks that all those reports come back by the end of April, and I have to tell you that I find that really challenging because I find that it's sort of at the latter part of the year that a lot of those strategies really get to the application piece and that latter February into end of April is where they really see the difference of what their trying to do so I do my wrap up meeting and then submit my report, hopefully by the 28th of May.
>
> So that's where I am. The one person who's on the formal, we have a more on-going contact because the need is more specific and you need to be in closer communication.

As Kate has said, all the teachers at GMES were part of the PPP. She facilitated goal-setting and arranged update meetings throughout the year to see how the strategies were leading to the attainment of the goals. There were wrap-up meetings later in the school year, after which reports were submitted. Kate indicated that she attempted to follow the letter and the spirit of the PPP process, but she had some difficulty meeting all the timelines. Her reason for not meeting them, however, had been to strengthen the process. She also tried to strengthen the process by adding to it and adapting it for her school.

> One other thing that I do in addition, with how our model is laid out, how I keep in touch with what's going on; it comes from an article of "walk-throughs" that I read and really liked what I was reading and thought it was "do-able" for me. One of the things I find challenging is meeting with teachers and talking after I informally drop-in and see things.
>
> Up until this year, I was a teaching principal, which made it even more challenging. So, this current year, I do more walk-throughs throughout the day, specifically in the afternoon when I'm not teaching. What this article spoke to was giving teachers feedback on what you saw. Coming in with a specific purpose and talking to the children to give feedback to the teacher. "What are you doing? Why are you doing that?" rather than asking the teacher their perception of how they see the teaching.

> The focus becomes on the learning and that's been a real "ah ha" for me because when what the teacher thinks is going on is matched by the students response – you know you can give that back to them and it's very powerful. And, on the other hand, when the teacher has this plan and they're talking about what they hope to accomplish during the lesson and then the feedback from the students is something very different then that also generates good conversation.

Kate had modified the PPP for the context of her school and her personal leadership style. Kate was dedicated to the PPP process and valued it, but she had personalized it and modified it for her school. She had given the teachers binders that would build into professional development portfolios based on the structure of the PPP.

Kate had scheduled time for staff meetings so that teachers had the opportunity to share their learnings and their goals with their colleagues. She did structured "walk-throughs" of classrooms and used the information gained from these visits to support the supervisory process where she put the emphasis on student learning. Kate used a reading lesson observation sheet to document her observations over time to ensure thought had been given to all components of a reading lesson. Kate had built her own structure for the PPP process that helped her to ensure it was meaningful and relevant in her school.

GMES teachers' experience. The teachers at GMES all saw the instructional supervision process, which they related to the PPP, as a positive one. The interviews were characterized by this positive presupposition. Bernard was positive about the program when he stated,

> I feel teachers are gaining by doing this process because – I'll repeat this quite often I'm sure during the interview –it helps you to focus, to target in on areas where you need to explore it more.

He also said, "The bottom line is we're in this together and we're here for the students and this is what this program addresses to me. That's why we're doing it."

The teachers at GMES all mentioned the steps in the PPP when asked about the instructional supervision process. Fran and Jennifer saw the supervision process as positive and related to their professional growth plans. Jennifer was clear that the PPP process had not been considered as an add-on to her. She stated that she viewed it as a part of her professional development. Jennifer had been involved in a series of district-wide inservices and had been the facilitating teacher for GMES regarding a series of language arts skills and strategies. She had built her professional growth plan around the responsibilities she had within her Area to facilitate inservice and new classroom approaches. Jennifer said,

> I see it as an opportunity to take an area that teachers identify within their own teaching practices that they want to develop or to grow in, or to learn more about; and so, it's an opportunity to sort of structure that learning, structure the growth and also monitor the progress through it.

All the teachers mentioned Kate's leadership as the key to the supervision process in their school. Referring to instructional supervision, Fran said, "In our school, it's very well done." She stated:

> I've been at other schools, being a term teacher you sort of bounce around a lot; it's not happening the same in other places. But here it's done very well, very thorough, and I think we probably meet three times a year, usually once per term, to see that we're meeting our goals. The goals we set with Kate, we try to make them so they're not an "add-on", not extra work, it's something that's going to benefit us, something we're doing already that we can perhaps do better or enhance.

Bernard said that he was not threatened by the process and viewed it as an opportunity for professional improvement that was directly related to student learning. He stated,

> After speaking with Kate, you know this was a program that would keep you focused on certain areas where you felt you could grow. And I'm all for growing

> because if I grow, my students will benefit and so over the years I feel, for me, this program has been effective.

As pointed out elsewhere, Jennifer said she was comfortable with the informal approach of Kate dropping into her classroom. She viewed that as supportive:

> I know that Kate's come into to my room different times to see what's going on. Quite often she'll slip in and I might not even know that she's there if I'm working with somebody. She'll be there for a period of time, sometimes it's shorter, sometimes it's a little longer, and then she goes. It doesn't disrupt anything

The teacher respondents valued her professional opinion and her support for their professional goals. This opinion came out strongly in my observations and my informal discussions with teachers. Her style of being out-and-about in the school and dropping into classrooms on a regular basis seemed to contribute to their ease and comfort with the supervisory model. To support that observation, I noted Kate out-and-about on many occasions.

My discussions on an informal basis, as I wandered into classrooms and chatted with teachers in the corridors, supported their openness to her coming into their rooms and talking to them or their students. They told me that they liked the fact that she knew what was happening in their classrooms and they could talk to her about instructional issues. Kate made sure all teachers were engaged in the process and this seemed to contribute to the feelings of fairness.

A supervisory interaction at GMES. I observed a supervisory interaction involving a teacher and the principal. It was a conference called an "update meeting" involving Kate and a teacher who was not interviewed for the study, where the goals set out in the PPP process were being reviewed and the progress toward the goals was monitored. The meeting took place in the teacher's classroom at a table near the teacher's desk. I sat

away from the table off to the side and near the blackboard in an attempt to be inconspicuous. During this conference, the teacher glanced at me several times, so I know she may have been uncomfortable with my presence, but as the conference went on she looked at me less and less, so I think their meeting became more comfortable as it progressed and she may have been able to accept my observing.

Kate used questions to generate discussion and to stimulate reflection during the meeting. The teacher discussed the activities she had undertaken to build her skills (an ASCD workshop was one example) and how she felt about her progress. Kate asked the teacher for evidence of progress and the conference ended with the teacher undertaking to collect the evidence and meet with Kate again to discuss it.

Evidence-based improvement was an important part of the discussion. When we debriefed after the supervisory interaction, I learned that Kate had been insistent that her supervision focus on learning rather that teaching. Kate believed that supervision should fit into instructional leadership and should increase the accountability level in the school. She also believed the PPP would give the staff a common language to discuss student learning. "Everything connects through the supervision process," Kate said. She added, "If we are paying attention to the supervision process we have a mechanism to address student learning." The need to support the supervision process through the collection of data was one way that Kate kept the process targeted on student learning.

Summary of the Supervision Experience at GMES

Teachers at GMES spoke of the PPP process in detail when asked about instructional supervision. They understood the process, had ownership for it, and knew where they fit into the cycle. The process seemed to be happening as a regular part of

school activity at GMES. Teachers saw the PPP process as part of their personal professional development program and did not appear to see it as an add-on or any kind of a threat to them as teachers. Each teacher described the goals they had identified (and were working toward) as making a difference in their classroom or their ability to perform their duties as teachers.

One of the teachers did not believe the PPP process was being implemented in a similar manner in other schools. She had worked elsewhere in the district and had not seen the process in place in the manner it was carried out at GMES. From this evidence, it appears as if there was a variance in supervisory activity in the schools in the system.

Kate believed in the PPP process and had adapted and modified it for her school. Kate's leadership was viewed to be a key ingredient in the PPP process in GMES and she was viewed by the teachers as a key to keeping the process meaningful and relevant. Her professionalism was mentioned by all the teachers interviewed. They liked to have her in their classrooms and around the school.

Supervision-in-experience at Coastal District High School

I have used the same process in this section as I followed for GMES. I have outlined the perspectives and experiences of the principal of Coastal District High School, followed by those of the teachers. I have described a supervisory interaction.

Helga's experience. Helga, the school principal, thought instructional supervision was important. She viewed it broadly, but saw it as an important part of her responsibilities. She said the following concerning her feelings about instructional supervision:

> I think it's great, it's important. You do have to find time to do it. However, the Board has been very good with their principals this year. They've offered two days of substitute time so that we can spend time with a teacher without that

> teacher worrying about their classroom or getting it covered off... Teachers need to know they can go to somebody to help them, support them.

Helga was out and about in the building and interacted with the teachers on an informal basis as much as possible in the course of a day. She described this interaction when she said, "I believe it's my responsibility to make sure that I'm around, that I'm visible to teachers; available to teachers; that I'm visible to students." At first when asked about her role in instructional supervision, she said:

> My take would be there's a formal aspect to it and then there's a more informal aspect to it that encompasses everything you're doing in the school which includes climate, teachers, abilities, reactions, teachers extra-curricular activities, students participating in extra-curricular activities, students wanting to do well, awards programs at school, the positive climate to be a very positive experience for the student. There is the formal where we're able to go into the teacher's classroom and just speak with the teacher and find out what they're doing, make sure they're teaching the curriculum, doing the testing, the assessment evaluation of students, and helping the teacher along in that manner.

In her initial answer, she spoke of the "informal" part of her supervisory role. She believed her informal supervision of all aspects of school life had a positive effect on the climate of the school. When prompted to discuss further her work directly with teachers on instruction, she said,

> All right, we do have that formal process. We have a preliminary assessment where every teacher receives a booklet of the Board's policies on teacher supervision. Then I ask the teacher to come in and speak with me. We do the preliminary assessment together and the teacher tells me what he thinks about himself in response to the questions and we do it online. Then there is a more formal part where I will go into the classroom and observe the teacher in action. Then I speak with the teacher after school to discuss. The first question would be, "How do you think your class was today?" We go through everything I've observed.

Helga was fully aware of the PPP process and used it in her school, but when referring to instructional supervision her first tendency was to refer to the informal, broader role.

CDHS teachers' experience. The teachers in Coastal District High School tended to see instructional supervision in global terms. Ellen, an art teacher, said,

> And, of course, teaching doesn't just take place in the classroom, therefore supervision doesn't just occur in the space of my, or any other teacher's, room. Extra-curricular activities, such as, in my case, a school art exhibit means my program is being 'supervised'.

Brian, a technical education (industrial arts and computer) teacher, articulated the following, "I think in a small school like we have here, staff and students have a nice close knit little community right here where everyone knows everybody beyond the teaching level". Sylvia, a guidance and health teacher, added:

> I think the principal sees a lot. She asks us to deliver the attendance (information to door of our classrooms) in the mornings. She is able to travel through the halls and see what's happening in the classrooms as she goes by and if there's a problem, then she can address that specifically as she goes by to that teacher. So it's not a one-time supervision, it's a continuous, 'How is this school functioning?' 'How are the teachers in the school functioning?'

She sated further:

> Supervision isn't a one time factor. Our previous principal, as well as Helga, would be in the halls, would be touching base with teachers about what's right and what's not right. Not just as a teacher but, what about the child that's driving you crazy, or the parent that's not helping their child at home and you're trying to get through that education isn't just at school, it's happening everywhere. It's an integrated process whether in the classroom, the hallways, the staff room, or in the photocopy room. We're talking about the principal being able to get a feel for what's going on in the classroom. Whether you're phoning home to the parent to talk about good and bad about each child in the class – that's all part of the supervision they're able to give and discuss it afterwards.

Teachers at CDHS all noted that it was positive to see the principal out-and-about the school. All of them were comfortable with her dropping in as she picked up the attendance, for example, and they spoke fondly of her "informal" visits. All teachers interviewed at CDHS expressed that they were comfortable with the principal having been in their classrooms. Meagan, a new teacher, offered that she had been comfortable

with drop-in visits and discussions with the principal about her teaching practice, but she "liked the idea" of full lesson observations and discussions related to the observations:

> I don't mind if Helga wants to pop-in from time-to-time. I'm not uncomfortable with that. I wouldn't be uncomfortable if she arranged to come in and sit in for a whole class. I would welcome the idea. I think it's good for me and it's probably good for her to see what's going on her classroom. I like the idea of other people giving me feedback so that I know that I'm doing what I'm supposed to be doing or maybe there's things that I can improve on.

She seemed to have a desire for more formal feedback on her instructional practices.

Meagan was ready and willing to participate in the supervisory process. Brian took that readiness a step further and said he was quite prepared to be accountable for his work as a teacher. He had worked in the private sector and saw the need for supervision and support, which he viewed positively.

> I worked a lot in the private sector and I find that you have to [be accountable for] the job and when I was at a job, perhaps where I worked on construction or what have you, people were always evaluating me there and if I wasn't doing my job then they would recommend or order you to do it a certain way; so I think you have to have that supervision or that level at the school to make people accountable for their job.

Brian was comfortable with the principal coming into his classroom and with being part of the supervision process, "…in my case, I don't really worry when someone will come to my room."

Two teachers, Sylvia and Ellen, (and principal Helga) mentioned professional learning communities (PLC) and spoke of the school in that regard. The staff had done a study of a book by DuFour and it was perceived positively by Sylvia. This type of professional discussion was interpreted broadly by Sylvia as part of the supervision program, even though there was no requirement for PLCs in the policy:

> It's the DuFours, professional learning communities. We each gave a mini lesson to the staff. We each took a role in teaching about the book. That is not

> supervision but it's an education of what kind of role we're expected to play in the school. So, it's not just supervision but – here's what we'd like to see you doing and we'll help you achieve that outcome. It's not go in and tick, tick, tick on a check off list, 'are you doing all these things?' It's a much broader supervision.

This open attitude toward professional development as part of the instructional supervision process contributed a flexible element to supervisory practice in the school. Sylvia welcomed this sense of direction and purpose. She interpreted Helga's role as one of facilitation and encouragement, but I also think that she accepted the philosophical basis for the inservice and welcomed the collegiality and collaboration.

Meagan, the beginning teacher, when asked how she and other teachers felt about supervision, said this,

> I would assume, just from the people on staff that I'm familiar with, that some of the older more experienced teachers probably don't think they need somebody else watching them do something they've done for twenty-five, thirty years. I would speculate that younger, newer teachers would be receptive to it more than older teachers who are set in their ways and have their teaching methods all sorted out.

Ellen, a more experienced teacher, when asked the same question, said, "The young teachers would be feeling the pressure. They don't have the confidence that comes with experience." She also said,

> I am very comfortable with other adults in the room now. My supervision reports have been positive, so over time I have come to feel confident that what I do as a teacher is being done to the best of my ability and is acceptable and appreciated in this learning community. I have no qualms about supervision now.

I found that the teachers interviewed in both schools were generally positive toward instructional supervision, but were not sure if other teachers felt as positive as they did.

A supervisory interaction at CDHS. I observed a supervisory interaction at CDHS, which was a post conference between Helga and a first year teacher. The conference

took place in the principal's office. The principal and the teacher sat around a round table and I sat off to the side beside the principal's desk. The principal and the teacher glanced in my direction prior to the discussion but once the conference started neither participant looked at me again. I took that as a sign that I was not inhibiting the interaction.

The teacher involved initially told Helga that he did not have his goals to show her because of a "memory stick problem" with his computer. Helga did not make this lack of documentation the focus of the conference. She asked the teacher about the strategies he was using in the classroom, particularly the use of games or puzzles in math. The teacher said he had tried games and she asked when and how many times. He had to admit it was just once, on a Friday, when the students may or may not have been motivated to participate.

The teacher's goals centred on classroom management and building his background knowledge in math and science. Helga asked him what the students were doing when the class was in the computer lab and he said they were working on volcanoes, and the books were away because they were in the lab. Helga made the suggestion (as she called it) that he make sure he used the full class time, because he seemed to have a tendency to not use the last ten minutes. She said, "The last part of your class seemed disorganized; be careful how you collect student work." Later in the conference, Helga asked the teacher if he felt the students were meeting the outcomes for his classes. He said there were some he had been worried about but some had been learning.

They reviewed the goals and she came back to the point that she still expected the teacher to bring her the goals. They spoke of his learnings over the course of the year and he spoke of the need to be more assertive at the beginning of the next school year if he had the opportunity to teach at CDHS again. She encouraged him to set his expectations for the students at the start and use effective routines. He said that he would be better organized next time and would make routines clear. Helga asked if there was anything she could do for him, such as to visit his class again or arrange for him to visit another teacher. He did not answer but said things were going better. She encouraged him to "keep on the management" and said they would talk again.

Summary of Experience at CDHS

My visits to CDHS led me to see that policy-in-experience at CDHS had the following characteristics. The teachers there had an open attitude to instructional supervision, in a broad sense. Teachers at CDHS spoke quite globally about instructional supervision, as did the principal. They saw interactions with the community, how they interacted with each other, and how they contributed to the operation of the school as valid links in the supervision process, not only what happened in their classrooms. They valued the fact that Helga was out-and-about in the school and enjoyed her informal visits and discussions. They valued her opinion and respected her as a colleague. If they were asked to discuss details of the process, they could identify the parts of the PPP, but their inclination was to speak globally about supervision and to relate it to all aspects of their work as teachers. Generally, they valued feedback and saw professional interaction as an important part of their responsibilities. They valued the informality of the process and

Helga's role was one of being out-and-about in the school and facilitating interactions and professional conversations.

GMES and CDHS were similar in that all teachers had experienced the various parts of the PPP process. At GMES, there was more formality to the process and supervision was built into professional development and staff meeting activity. At CDHS, the process was more informal and supervision was seen as part of wider activity in the school.

Strengths and Weaknesses of the Instructional Supervision Process

In the individual interviews I conducted, I asked all respondents for their opinion of the strengths and weaknesses of instructional supervision in the Region. The strengths and weaknesses are another aspect of policy-in-experience that illustrates the respondents' perspectives of the process. A number of the teachers did not identify a weakness, but the principals and the district level personnel all offered opinions in that regard.

Strengths. The most commonly mentioned strength of the instructional supervision process was its focus on professional growth. Greg and Dave, from the district, Sylvia, from CDHS, and Kate, Fran, Jennifer and Bernard from GMES identified "growth" as one of the key strengths of the instructional supervision (PPP) process. Greg said,

> I think the strength is on the professional growth side and I hear that time and again, particularly from teachers when I visit schools, but I ask teachers when I visit schools. The growth side seems to emerge as the strength side of the project and that's really important because most of our folk are very competent.

Kate commented on growth as follows:

> It's a focus on learning and I believe that when a teacher first starts out in a classroom their whole focus is on teaching. 'What do I need?' 'What do I have to do?' And then, as they become more experienced, they look out and say,

> ‘Okay, I did this and what cause did it have? What effect?’ Because then you look at the learning that takes place.

Sylvia commented,

> The strengths of instructional supervision are that it focuses the teacher on what they are doing within their classroom, their weekly, monthly and yearly goals. So it allows a teacher to stay focused when it’s necessary.

Fran said the following:

> I think the strength is that it does give you an area to grow in, it gives you a focus. I think it’s as non-threatening as it can be. It’s a very positive thing. I like that it’s a lengthy period of time so you can really grow in that area; it’s not just short bursts.

Jennifer said succinctly, “I think the strength is that it is teacher-directed and motivated.” Bernard believed strongly that the process fostered his growth as a teacher. He believed that the PPP process supported growth and change:

> I feel confident that this process is a good process. We need to be consistent, but it’s a good process because it’s working...As time goes on changes occur all the time, so we have to adjust and this process really helps you to focus on areas that are constantly changing…So this process helps you to stay focused as a professional and by doing that, everyone will benefit, especially the students.

Professional growth was identified as a strength of the process, and generally it was seen as teacher-directed and positive. Bernard related this professional growth directly to the benefit of his students.

A number of people identified that the existence of a defined process was a strength. Allan, from district office, said, “The strength is the process we have in place.” Fran used similar language, “I think the strength is the fact that we have a program in place.” Susan added her voice, “The strength is that we do have a fairly good beginning to a supervision program.” Dave said,

> The strengths of the process/policy/system are that first of all, it’s not just supervision: it’s support and supervision. It is based on assumptions about

> professional growth and those assumptions are reflected in the processes and when it's well-implemented you can see that it absolutely does promote professional growth.

Kate gave her perspective:

> It's a process that everybody is going to be part of. It's a renewal; it's not a one-time event. That it is truly a process that does, I believe, reflect all facets of a teacher's responsibilities.

The existence of a defined process that was perceived to be fair to teachers was considered to be a strength by a number of the respondents. The PPP process seemed widely understood and accepted.

Some respondents saw strengths that were not mentioned by others. Brian saw accountability as a strength of instructional supervision:

> I would say it [the strength] is to make people accountable for their job and it makes people aware, especially in a government job, that they have a government job and think that they are their own boss and they don't have to answer to a supervisor or whatever.

Meagan felt it was a strength that she got to know her principal and that the principal knew what was happening in the classrooms. She also valued "constructive criticism" from a valued colleague.

> The strengths: I think it's a great way for the administration to get to know their teachers and vice versa. It makes me feel a lot more comfortable knowing that I can talk, if I need to, and have them give me feedback. Constructive criticism is, I think, a bonus. For me, being a young teacher, having experienced people give me a little bit of boost in confidence once-in-a-while or, maybe you want to try this avenue and see if this works, a few little hints and tricks to the trade is valuable to me. Other strengths: I think those two are the main things for me. I think it's important for the administration to know who's in their classrooms and take the time to come in and see how they interact with their students and interact with other staff members and things like that.

Ellen identified positive feedback, and through that feedback building the confidence of the teachers. She valued the opinion of her principal:

> The strength of the supervision process is that it does build your confidence and self-esteem when positive feedback is given. Our principal pin-points our strengths, letting us know that what we are doing is effective.

The strengths of the instructional supervision process that were mentioned by a number of the respondents were its focus on professional growth and the existence of a clear process through the PPP. Every interviewee identified a strength of instructional supervision.

Weaknesses. There were several weaknesses that were identified by more than one of the respondents. (I think these "weaknesses" may best have been termed as "challenges" in looking at the data in retrospect, but "challenges" was not the terminology that was used.)

The Board Chair, the Coordinator of Human Resources, and the principals identified lack of time as a factor, as did two of the teachers, one from each school (Meagan and Bernard). Board Chair Jane said, "We do have a procedure in place. I look at it and I sometimes think it's cumbersome and I wonder if the principals have enough time to do it". Allan gave a less direct comment on time when he mentioned the magnitude of instructional supervision in the context of all the personnel appraisals that need to be done.

> Another fact, the magnitude of the whole process, talking not only teachers but other board employees – janitors, bus drivers, secretaries, administrators – getting that all flowing.

Helga took a different approach to the time issue. She commented on the high expectations held for principals and the myriad of jobs they are required to do. She suggested a change in school management structure to help address the issue of time constraints for instructional supervision.

> That there should be a person who manages the building with the janitorial problems, the cafeteria, the library – doing those kinds of things. And then the actual supervision section where the principal spends a lot of time with teachers – I don't think I spend enough time with teachers – so, where everyday you could be in a classroom all day long, helping teachers out rather than being torn in a million different directions. In a way, I think the school board is going the right way and I think it's great. There is quite a bit of support there, but I think it's an overwhelming kind of job. We can't possibly do everything.

Helga's principal colleague, Kate, also mentioned time as a consideration.

> Well, the time to engage [is important]. You have your formal meetings and because the Board puts dates in and expectations for materials to be submitted then you are held accountable to that. Sometimes I think it can be a false process if it's not seen as a process more than an event.

GMES teacher, Bernard, stated that he was afraid that the PPP process was going to be a major time factor, but his concerns had been alleviated once he had engaged in the process.

> I was a bit concerned that it might turn into something that would require a lot of time and effort; might create a little tension, a little stress, and I felt as a teacher there's enough on my plate to keep me busy. I found it to be the opposite for me. I found it to be a very good learning experience. As a person, my opinion, when you feel yourself growing, there's nothing like it.

Meagan made these comments about time:

> We're a small school we have a relatively small staff so it probably isn't as big a concern as it might be in a larger school, but time constraints would be a problem, probably.

Dave had a different view of the time issue, which was consistent with my own experience. He commented that whatever format was selected for supervision, there were always the same issues about getting principals to make it a priority.

> In the first days of supervising teachers, the complaint from principals was, well we have to do every teacher every year, even though it was a simple checklist they were dealing with. Then the complaint was all this goal-setting stuff takes so much time. We only have to do 25% of the people but it's still a time issue. Now people are saying this is too complex, I wish I had a simple checklist.

He also said, “I don’t believe it’s about time, it’s about commitment and it’s about understanding that it’s really important.” He believed that principals must prioritize instructional supervision if it were to occur. Dave believed that time was not the real issue, but getting people to make supervision a priority was a huge challenge.

Dave and Kate were concerned about the challenge of conversations with teachers when there was a discrepancy of opinion between principal and teacher about the teacher’s level of skill. Dave expressed that he thought it was a weakness in the process that many administrators found it hard to tell teachers that there was problem with their teaching.

> One of the challenges with people supervising teachers is you have to get to the point where you are willing and able to sit face-to-face with someone and say, ‘Look, here are three things I think you’re doing really well but there’s two others you’re not doing as well as you need to.’ That’s a difficult conversation to have because people take it personally and if you haven’t set it up so that they’re ready for that conversation and they don’t believe that you’re honestly going to try and help them, it’s a difficult conversation to have. We don’t have enough people with the kind of background that leads them to have the courage and the calm to have that conversation because ultimately you have to be willing to go there.

Kate also identified the challenge of difficult conversations with the teachers. In the context of the preliminary appraisal, Kate identified the issue of disagreement between administrator and teacher over the rating on the 14 performance responsibilities.

> A challenge with the PPP is when you’re meeting with a teacher and talking about perception and because teaching is something you do because of what you know to do, if you haven’t had a lot of experience being in a place where you watch other people teach, then you only know one way and you might think that’s the best way and you’re doing a really good job. So you may see yourself as “proficient” or as “distinguished” and when you’re asked or are showing what you’re doing, what you have in place to support them, I believe what they show you is not what you would consider “proficient” or “distinguished” and it sometimes leads to conflict with that teacher.
>
> So, there needs to be work coming into it to tell them that it’s not good enough to say, ‘I see myself as....’ They need to be told, ‘You’ll be asked to show and

> support that belief by what you say and do and what you have in place.' And, if it means you want to invite me into your classroom to see things, it doesn't all have to be during that one time frame. But, you do need to support what you're saying and that hasn't always worked out well. Some teachers, surprisingly, or, not surprisingly, it's the teachers who aren't as competent who believe that they are; whereas the teachers who you see as highly skilled don't rate themselves as high. As a person on the other side of the table, that's always been really interesting to me. So, when I first begin that meeting with the preliminary appraisal, I sort of work on how teachers rate themselves and it is a steering process.

There seemed to be a balance between self-perception and the perception of the supervisor. The supervisor could facilitate the reflection process of the teacher if the situation turned out positively, but if the teacher was not a reflective practitioner, it might be a difficult situation..

Following up on his thoughts about time, Dave made the point that it is difficult to get all the principals to do instructional supervision. He said that a lot of them say it is being done informally, but then there was no proof that the professional conversations were occurring. He referred to one of the weaknesses, or one of the challenges, as "actioning the system" to ensure that the PPP process (instructional supervision) occurred. His comments follow.

> One of the key things with a support and supervision system is not what you've got in a document about what the system is supposed to look like, it's about what you actually do with it when you're in the school, in the classroom, and that's the hard part. It's relatively easy to develop a great looking system, schematic, conceptual map of how it's all going to fit together and who's going to do what and all that kind of stuff. Implementing it is the real challenge.

Dave also said,

> We have too many principals who don't supervise teachers and I've seen this when I've interviewed for positions. People apply for positions. I go to their file and if they're a principal I go to every teacher's file in their school to see how this principal's leadership is reflected in the file of the teachers, and when you can't find it, you go back and say to them, 'There's no record of any supervision.'

> They'll say things like, Well you know I do it informally; I visit a lot of classrooms and I talk to my teachers so it's professional conversations that are most important.'
>
> To some degree, I agree that professional conversations are important, but if you're in a system and you have a support and supervision model and you have personal files in the end, the documentation has to reflect the system you've got in place. No documentation is an absence of a system. You might be a charismatic leader but systems need to work on a bunch of other stuff besides.

Greg, superintendent, noted a concern not raised by the other respondents, although alluded to by Dave. Greg said that the PPP process had not identified teachers who were not doing their job and moved them through a process whereby the conclusion of the process was that the teacher lost his or her job because of incompetence. He felt that with the number of teachers that were in the system, there must have been some that were not good enough to meet the standards. None had been identified. He described the issue from his perspective.

> The down side is, as I mentioned to you earlier, that during my tenure we've dismissed teachers but it's usually been due to things like sexual antics or things that are gross negligence of one sort or another. I have yet to see come forward from HR and Education, in a combined package, that over a period of a number of years we have documented in the "PPP" a dismissal. So that would be one of my questions at the round table. Surely, we've got 1500 teachers or more, surely at some point, the process would have identified and then put into effect such that there be that recommendation coming forward.
>
> As tough as it is, and as tough as it might be to stick, I think we do need a test of the system in that regard because there's no logic. Somewhere in that bell curve – now you've got your absolutely top. So that to me raises questions and I guess that's an implied criticism but I don't have the stuff to back it up. It's more a sense of there's something not quite kosher about that.

While this study focused on supervision (not evaluation), I identified Greg's concern because he saw it as a weakness of the PPP process.

Summary of strengths and weaknesses. The strengths and weaknesses of procedures are an important part of the discussion on policy-in-experience. The major strengths of

instructional supervision in MRSB, as experienced and identified by a number of the respondents, were seen to be the growth orientation evident in the system and the fact that there was a workable and predictable structure in place for the process through the PPP. The commitment to professional development through the supervision process was a general comment of most of the respondents. The clarity and openness of the PPP process, and its fairness for that reason, was also perceived to be a strength. The discussions, through the interviews and with other teachers in the school, led me to believe the PPP process was generally believed to be a fair one with an orientation for growth. Both district level and school-based personnel seemed to understand the PPP and identified its processes in a positive frame.

In terms of weaknesses and challenges, the Board chair was afraid that not enough time was being provided to principals to conduct the supervision process. This view was in opposition to Dave's, who said that time was not really the issue; the challenge was getting principals to make supervision a priority. There were varying opinions on the time issue, but both principals were concerned about the time the process took and the time they had for interactions with teachers about instruction.

A weakness identified by several of the respondents was the competence of the principals in the area of supervision and their desire to be part of the process. Having tough conversations with teachers was identified as a challenge. The conversations could have been related to differences in opinion about the preliminary assessment of a teacher's ability or related to telling a teacher directly that he or she needed to improve.

Dave believed it had been (and was still) a challenge to get principals to do instructional supervision. This view was supported by comments by teachers, noted in a

previous section, who had taught in other schools, and had not seen the supervision process done as thoroughly as it had been in the school where they presently taught.

Greg noted that the supervision process through the PPP rarely (if ever) identified a teacher who was not competent and could not continue with their duties for that reason. He felt that with the number of teachers in the district that this identification should have been happening from time to time.

Summary: Policy-in-experience

The teachers in the two schools were generally positive about the instructional supervision process and were positive about the role played by their principals. They appreciated seeing the principals out-and-about in the school and wanted them in their classrooms.

The principal and teachers at CDHS saw the instructional supervision process as a broad and somewhat informal process. The CDHS staff spoke positively about instructional supervision as a process of monitoring all functions of teaching and spoke fondly of the informal contact with Helga. One teacher, however, said she would have liked more formal classroom visits from Helga. When pressed, the staff could identify the components of the PPP and knew a formal process was in place.

The principal and teachers at GMES saw the PPP as the instructional supervision process in their school. The teachers spoke positively of their interactions with Kate and did not view the PPP as an add-on. They viewed the PPP as an important component of their professional development. They all identified the components of the process and knew where they fit into the cycle. They appreciated the modifications made to the process for their school by Kate.

I identified professional growth as one of the main strengths of the instructional supervision process in MRSB. The respondents saw a fair, clearly defined process, the PPP, as positive for themselves and for the system.

Weaknesses (or challenges) focused on time to conduct the supervision process, the difficulty of the conversations that grew out of the process, and getting the principals to do instructional supervision.

The Purpose of the Study Revisited: Vision and Policy to Experience

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between the expressed vision of a school district with a reputation for exemplary instructional supervision, and its instructional supervision practices in two schools. In order to address this purpose, I examined the relationship of the system's vision and the system's policy, and the relationship between the system's policy and the experience of key actors.

The Vision and Experience

The assumption undergirding this study was that vision acts as meta-policy (Downey, 1988) to express an overarching philosophy or way of doing business. The expressed vision of the Midlands Regional School Board was described in an earlier section. The respondents did not know the vision of the Board in exact terms. None of the respondents identified all six elements of the vision (as I have characterized them). Most of the respondents identified one or two elements of the vision, and only two identified three elements (see Figure 7). This lack of identification of the elements did not seem to mean, however, that they did not think they had a general understanding of the philosophy and direction of the Board. Kate said that there was "a united statement of what we stand for" and from the tone of my discussions with the teachers, I think that

all believed that they were working in the direction that the Board wanted them to go. Ellen commented on the word “vision”.

> The word vision though, suggests to me something that exists in the future or is ideal in its thinking; something that needs to be worked on in order to become ideal, assuming that the ideal can be obtained.

Ellen believed that the vision was an “ideal” which may or may not be obtainable. In her concept of a vision, there needed to be work done to achieve the ideal. She seemed to perceive herself to be working toward the Board’s “ideal’.

The element of the vision that was referred to most often by the respondents was being “student centred’. I have to ask, “Why was this element mentioned the most?” Could it have been that being student-centred was considered as generically “good” in the education system? Could it have been that the respondents believed that they worked for an organization to provide education to students, such that being student-centred would be seen as positive? Could it have been that the respondents knew the mission/vision of the district and that being student-centred was part of it? The data indicated that only a small part of the mission/vision was reflected in the answers of each respondent. I can only speculate about why the respondents suggested the elements that they did.

All of the respondents seemed to believe that they were working within the parameters of the district and what was expected of them by the Board. Greg believed he was articulating the vision of the Board, although his wording did not directly link to the formal mission/vision. It became clear from the data that what was printed as the formal vision was only part of what established the direction for the district. Maybe there was a need to look further to see what shaped the direction and the action.

In addition to developing a formal mission/vision, a board often expresses its beliefs through policies or by establishing boundaries for its CEO (Carver, 1990). The policies of a board can be examined as well as the manner in which they are operationalized to see how the vision is implemented. One can also look at the beliefs of the superintendent who was, in this case, the CEO of the board.

The Vision of the Superintendent in Experience

Greg, Superintendent of Schools, had his own summary of the vision which he expressed to me during our interview, "Let's go for excellence". He put it into the context of employee performance in the district: "No matter how excellent you are in your job function today, you can always do better. So let's push forward with that as the vision for the Region." When I examined the Personnel Performance Program and the role it played in the system, this implementation seemed to be directly related to the interpretation of the vision by the Superintendent. He said,

> The Personnel Performance Program is one component of that 'in achieving excellence' as it offers an opportunity for folks to see where they are today and what kind of progress they make on that journey.

So, in this interpretation, the PPP was offering a "shared picture of the future" (my definition of vision) for teachers and their administrators on their professional development journey.

The PPP, which I have suggested as the policy-in-action related to instructional supervision in MRSB, was an important part of the vision of the Superintendent in advancing "excellence". In the policy-in-intention, the Board's policy on Personnel Performance, the Superintendent was charged with the responsibility to "develop, implement, and monitor the practices and procedures described in the MRSB document,

Personnel Performance Program…" (Board Policy #M-HR-08). As part of his vision, the Superintendent said that pursuing excellence was actualized through the implementation of instructional supervision through the PPP.

The expressed vision of a key actor in the district (the superintendent) was directly related to instructional supervision (the PPP). His belief that he and the Board were key role models for how this policy was implemented, tied vision to action via the implementation of policy. He is quoted on this topic as follows:

> I think we did set that tone and then I assure that I definitely do [appraise] the directors. Annually that's done, and then it just cascades. But I don't want any breaks in the chain. I think it was important to set the tone from the top on this, not expecting the principals to carry it out and then having things just stop at the supervisor.

Setting the tone, modeling, and believing in the process as a key part of his vision were key mechanisms used by the Superintendent to actualize the mission of the Board, as he saw it, through the supervision process. Judging by Greg's comments, and the positive view held of him by the Board chair, it would seem that the Board had given the Superintendent the freedom to interpret the policy as he saw fit, but that freedom of interpretation did not assure a link between the vision and the policy. Further, he saw himself as philosophically consistent with the Board and implementing its vision. Four of the six elements of the Board's vision were reflected in the PPP, the supervision process used in the district. The discussion that follows sheds further light on the relationship between the vision of the Superintendent and the Board's policy.

Policy and Experience

The formal policy of the Board on personnel performance stated that the Board was "committed to excellence in education" (see Figure 8). It recognized that excellence

was dependent on the "quality of work" of employees in the district. The policy charged the Superintendent with the task of implementing the Midlands Regional School Board document: the Personnel Performance Program.

The Human Resources Department had led the process of creating a PPP for each class of employees. There were varying opinions on how well the procedures from these documents had been put into practice. Dave called it "actioning the system" and he was not convinced that the policies were being implemented across the district. Susan admitted that she had problems keeping up with her role in appraisals, and the Board Chair said that she felt that the procedure for instructional supervision was cumbersome, and was not sure that they provided principals with enough time to do it. At the school level, particularly at GMES, some teachers felt the supervision process was being carried out well in their school but were not convinced it was being done well throughout the district, because of what had been experienced in other schools.

The policy, on its own, did not seem to lead to district-wide action or to create a common experience in all the schools. The district had created the Personnel Performance Program, Instructional/Teacher (PPP) and the policy charged the Superintendent with its implementation. The principles that were stated as the basis of the PPP were taken directly from the policy on personnel performance. One can examine the data from the two schools in the study to see if the PPP was put into action

The Personnel Performance Plan in Experience

The Personnel Performance Program, Instructional/Teacher (PPP) was the policy-in-action of the Board related to instructional supervision. The Board made it clear in its

formal policy that it expected that the Superintendent implement the PPP; therefore it might have been assumed that the wishes of the Board were carried out through the PPP.

The PPP process was examined in light of the interview and observation data to check for its congruence with what the teachers and principals were experiencing in the schools. That examination gave direct evidence of policy-in-action influencing policy-in-experience. As seen in Figure 9, four of the six elements of the vision were generally congruous with the PPP, so, at least for those elements, the policy-in-action could be broadly interpreted as vision-in-action if it were implemented as intended. I turn now to an examination of each school, in turn, regarding how the interview and observation data show the PPP in experience through the eyes of the school-based personnel.

The PPP in Experience at* Green *Meadows Elementary School

Kate, the principal of Green Meadows Elementary School (GMES), was clear about the PPP process and how she tried to implement it.

> We have a model called the "PPP" – Personnel Performance Program. It's based on a preliminary appraisal on 14 job responsibilities that really cover all aspects that come under the Education Act and it's a four-year cycle. At the beginning of that model, the principal would sit with the teacher and have a look at where they are with their level of understanding and the application of that knowledge to their particular classroom, and they get identified whether they're 'distinguished', 'satisfactory', 'proficient", or 'basic' and then following that preliminary appraisal, what happens next is they identify with their principal as to where their growth plan would begin.

This description was almost directly consistent with the PPP document and how it suggested the process should be implemented (PPP document p. 15). Kate was aware of the policy and attempted to implement it with her staff:

> Well, it's mandated by our Board, we do use the model, the "PPP", and currently all staff are on board at some level – a year within the cycle. Our part-time teachers go through the appraisal every year so some of those part-time people are people who return…That looks somewhat the same for teachers who are

> permanent on staff once they go through that preliminary appraisal, 25% of your staff, that's how the model was implemented. Then, all of but one of my staff at this time, are on a PD development plan. So, they've set goals that will last for a three year period (plus the first year) and each year they identify a strategy specific to that one time frame.

Bernard, grade six teacher, was clear on the use of the PPP:

> I started my personal performance program. It's called 'PPP' and I've been under this program now for the last three years…I started this program and this program is based on 14 responsibilities that teachers have and I sat down with my principal and, you basically evaluate yourself on these 14 responsibilities. There are four different categories.

He also said:

> You go over each responsibility and you evaluate yourself on each one and the different categories that you use to give you a mark. You have 'basic', 'proficient', and then of course the highest, would be 'distinguished'. So as I evaluated myself on each responsibility I noticed there were a few areas that I could improve on, and of course, if I improved on these areas, then my students would benefit.

Bernard said that he set goals in the areas on which he could improve and then worked with his principal toward the attainment of the goals, "So after I evaluated, after we finished the evaluation, you set dates where you will meet and you get to discuss". He explained that Kate had given the staff binders based on the 14 performance responsibilities that could build into professional portfolios. He also talked of Kate building time into staff meetings to discuss the PPP process.

> She introduced these binders that are divided into different categories – the 14 different responsibilities – as you go along as a teacher, as you pick up something that fits into a certain category, you just add it on. Then at staff meetings, she'll set staff meetings aside just for sharing the portfolio amongst teachers. We get to share what's working what's not working.

Bernard's view of the PPP was similar to Kate's, which corresponded with the steps in the PPP along with the addition of Kate's modifications: the binders and the staff meeting time.

When asked about the instructional supervision process, Jennifer also referred to the PPP.

> I've been part of the 'PPP' program for; I guess this is my fourth year. So, at certain intervals each year we meet and set my goals at the beginning and then we're required to meet a certain number of times each year and look at how I'm doing and where I want to go next.

She further described the PPP process as she had experienced it.

> What we had to do, in the beginning, we had to rate ourselves where we thought we were in each of these 14 performance responsibilities so, we rated ourselves and Kate rated us, and then we met and discussed each thing and this is where we decided I'd fit…maybe some day I'll be 'distinguished'. I have worked hard to learn, as much as I could.
>
> We established some goals and worked through… for example, last year, I typed out some things and then we met to talk about these are the things I would have done that would fit in with my goal, to continue that growth.

Jennifer, too, identified the PPP process and related the steps out of the actual policy document.

Fran had similar observations to those of the other teachers from GMES. She talked about the process of the ratings, the goal setting and the ongoing monitoring. She also discussed the binder given by Kate.

> Teachers are required to go through a "PPP" process, a personal performance program process, where we're supervised; they're cycled and on-going for three years. I'm in the third year of my process. The first year, my principal and I sit together and create a goal in an area that I feel I want to grow in or improve upon. We sit down, we create a goal and some strategies and some timelines for that and we discuss it.
>
> I take that aside, firm-up my strategies, my timeline, we meet again – we met three times, I think, in my first year. We evaluate ourselves on 14, I believe there are 14 performance responsibilities, and I self-reflect on that and rate myself and I'm also rated by the principal on that at the end of the year. So we have several meetings here. We have binders to organize our information and to prove each of the 14 points; we sort of put evidence within it.

Fran also was aware of the process. She said it was a three year process (it was actually a four year cycle) but, for the most part, she was clear about the process and saw herself engaged in it.

The supervisory interaction I observed at GMES was an update meeting related to the PPP, so I had personal experience in observing the process in the school. From the manner in which the principal and teacher approached that meeting, it was clear to me that the process was not a surprise or. In other words, the PPP process seemed to be part of the ongoing way of doing business in the school.

In summary, the GMES staff viewed themselves as being an active part of the PPP process in the school, and it was the normal way of doing business on instructional supervision and professional growth. The policy of the Board (the Personnel Performance Program) was evident in the supervisory interaction at GMES. It is clear that the character of the interactions was related to the actions of the principal.

The PPP in Experience at Coastal District High School

Helga, principal of Central District High School (CDHS), understood the PPP process and used it in her school, but had a broader vision of instructional supervision and it encompassed more than the PPP:

> We have a preliminary assessment where every teacher receives a booklet of the Board's policies on teacher supervision. Then I ask the teacher to come in and speak with me. We do the preliminary assessment together and the teacher tells me he thinks about himself in response to the questions and we do it online. Then there is a more formal part where I will go into the classroom and observe the teacher in action. Then I speak with the teacher after school to discuss. The first question would be, "How do you think your class was today?". We go through everything I've observed.
>
> How the teacher feels about the class, comments, suggestions they think they can make about ways to improve it. I offer my comments and suggestions…So we go through that. They write up a plan for themselves as to what their goals would be

> for the year and the strategies they would use to meet those goals and then towards the end of the year, some time in April is when the School Board wants all this paper work and the teacher signs it off and I make a little comment whether he's been successful or not and where improvements could be made. That's the formal part.

In describing her broader viewpoint, and how she related all the functions of teaching to the instructional supervision process, she stated:

> On a day-to-day basis, for example, a little pet peeve of mine is I like the teachers to be in their classrooms by 8:30 a.m. It works okay for a time, and just like the children, who are a little late to class, teachers tend to slack off a little, so I feel it's up to me, I have to get out there and let the teacher know that I expect them to be there at 8:30 when all hell is breaking loose in the hallway and all the doorways are closed to classrooms.
>
> There's the everyday kind of little things that have to be taken care of so the big things don't happen. Opening the classroom at 8:35 a.m. is kind of a simple idea. If you're around for the students, they can come in. So I find I get after teachers on this little kind of 'daily' things. We have a monthly staff meeting. We like to talk about what works well, what doesn't work well. We've been doing a bit of PD on school improvement and professional learning communities. We've really gotten into that.

While Helga understood and used the PPP, she related her role in maintaining order in the school to the instructional supervision process and to creating a professional learning community.

All the teachers at CDHS could identify generally the steps in the PPP process and had used it to set goals. The details of the PPP were largely absent from the descriptions of the teachers at CDHS. Brian said,

> I just finished my goals, in my last supervision… One of my goals was to make the EPSS work, and the EPSS is the electronic performance support system. I know some people are taking the same course I'm taking and they're just doing it because it's a requirement of the diploma. But it's a goal of mine to have the rest of my courses on line as well. I think it's quite important to have those goals.

Ellen said,

> Every year we are asked to come up with between three and four goals that we are trying to work on in order to prevent our teaching practices from becoming stale. This year, for example, I am working on three goals. One of mine is to learn more about the computer software on my four new MacIntosh computers so that I may integrate more technology in my social studies classes.

Meagan added,

> We were asked to fill out kind of like an evaluation of our own teaching, where we saw that we needed to improve things and how we would approach improving those things…I believe it stems from the School Board. Helga gave me these sheets to fill out and I did that and then we'd meet and talk about where I thought my strengths were and where I thought my weaknesses were and talked about ways of fixing things or improving things. So, not in a formal way of her coming into my classroom, but we have had formal discussions. We've sat down to talk about my teaching methods and things in her office.

Sylvia contributed,

> It's on a rotating basis. We've had it explained to us that you have to be supervised once every period of time and based on whether you're a first year teacher or experienced, how much supervision is put in place.
>
> Probably at the beginning of the year, we were given a schedule, or maybe two years ago we were given – this is how supervision will be conducted - and it was explained that it's not a threatening process and you will be supervised at these particular times. Then, we do an analysis of our classroom goals. We do that on a yearly basis and discuss it with our principal, which is not necessarily classroom supervision but it's certainly setting out what you want to accomplish over a period of time. That was explained in paperwork, probably at an early staff meeting. So I know it's in place but I don't have the details and I really don't worry about it because it's supervision that comes.

Sylvia, like the other teachers at CDHS, was not as familiar with all the details of the PPP as were the teachers at GMES, but she was aware of the process and knew that it involved goal setting and that it was ongoing. The teachers at CDHS saw the question of instructional supervision as broader than the PPP, although in the PPP the performance responsibilities addressed many aspects beyond classroom teaching.

In summary, at CDHS the PPP process was experienced by the teachers and the principal, but it seemed to be conducted more as a routine to file the appropriate

paperwork and to identify goals for the teachers. The whole process of instructional supervision was one in which the teachers were engaged, but, as Helga noted, many aspects of it were informal, ongoing, and related to broad issues of school management. The vision of the Board, as expressed through its policy on instructional supervision, the Personnel Performance Program, was not enacted as directly into policy-in-experience for the staff of CDHS as it was for the staff at GMES. The principal interpreted the policy more broadly, and put in place a variety of supervisory activities, not necessarily espoused in the PPP.

Summary

In this chapter, I introduced the setting for the study. I described Midlands Regional School Board and the schools: Green Meadows Elementary School and Coastal District High School. I profiled the respondents to the interviews. I examined the data from the study in light of the research questions and the conceptual framework.

The teachers in both schools perceived instructional supervision positively. Most staff members had at least tacit knowledge of the mission/vision of the Board, but were vague in their interpretations. When I examined the relationship of the elements of the vision to the Personnel Performance Program, Instructional/Teacher, I found that there were more matches than gaps. The mission/vision of the Board seemed to be at least partially related to the policy on instructional supervision and the actual supervisory practices in the Region. The examination of policy-in-experience showed that the PPP was in the experience of the teachers in the two schools but from different perspectives and with different levels of detail. The interpretation of the vision by the Superintendent

seemed to be an influence on the implementation of the policy on instructional supervision.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, A HEURISTIC, AND IMPLICATIONS

I have examined the relationship between expressed vision of a school district in Eastern Canada, which had a reputation for exemplary instructional supervision, and its practices in two schools. This research was a study based on the principles of naturalistic inquiry conducted during the period of March to June, 2006. Data were collected using semi-structured interviews, document analysis and observations, with accompanying field notes.

In this chapter, I review the *Findings* from the data. I then explore the data in light of the literature in a *Discussion* of issues that surfaced. I introduce a *Heuristic* for the implementation process based upon my interpretation of the data, and, of course, the interpretations that were provided by the participants. This constituted an epistemology of *double hermeneutics* (Peshkin, 2000). Finally, I address the *Implications* of the study for leadership action through policy, practice, theory and further research.

Summary of Findings

The district in which the study was conducted was located in a province in Eastern Canada. I assigned it the pseudonym of the Midlands Regional School Board. It was divided into areas and the schools that were studied came from two areas from widely separated areas of the district. Green Meadows Elementary School was a primary to grade six school located in the Central Area and was located just outside of the largest urban centre in the district. Coastal District High School was a grade seven to 12 school located in the Midlands Area in the northern part of the district.

The participants in the semi-structured interviews were the principals, three teachers from GMES, four teachers from CDHS, the Superintendent, the Board Chair, the Director of Education Services, the Coordinator of Human Resources, and the Area Supervisor for the Central Area. I interviewed them in a private location in their school, the district office, or the area sub-office. I spent enough time on site at each school and the district office so that I was able to observe some daily interactions and have informal conversations which contributed to the richness of the data. I had the opportunity to observe supervisory interactions in both schools, and to make general observations when I visited the schools and district office. I kept field notes to support the observations. In keeping with the purpose of the study, I studied the vision of the district and various interpretations of it.

The Vision (Meta-policy)

The mission of the Board had been developed shortly after amalgamation. According to the Board Chair, it had been reviewed periodically, but only minor changes had been made. The latest version had been created in 2003. I divided the mission/vision of the Board into six elements:

- student-centred learning community
- a safe and supportive learning environment
- developing creative, confident and responsible global citizens
- pride in local community, culture and heritage
- enriching the quality of educational opportunities
- high expectations for all.

Participants were asked to describe the vision of the Board. The elements that were mentioned most often were the safe and supportive learning environment and a student-centred learning community. Six of seven respondents who mentioned safe and supportive learning environment were from the schools (equally distributed between schools), but the respondents who discussed a student-centred learning community were almost equally distributed between the two schools and the district office.

The Superintendent spoke of being committed to "excellence" and I interpreted these comments to be related to the element of high expectations. He was the only participant who mentioned that element. None of the respondents mentioned the element of pride in local community, culture, and heritage.

As the data summarized in Figure 7 indicate, there was generally a low level of awareness of the expressed vision of the district among participants, although, from the tone of their comments, all participants seemed to feel that they were working toward the vision of the Board. Most of the respondents identified only one or two elements in their description of the vision, but two of them identified three elements.

The Policy (Policy-in-intent)

The Board had a one page policy on Personnel Performance (which was included in its entirety in Figure 8). In the policy, the overriding concepts were a commitment to excellence and empowering the Superintendent to implement the Personnel Performance Programs for each branch of the Human Resources Department. In the context of this study, that was the Personnel Performance Program, Instructional/Teacher (PPP).

The PPP was created under the authority of the Superintendent by a representative committee of the staff of the district. The process was led by the Coordinator of Human Resources and took three years to complete. It included 14 performance responsibilities. In the PPP process, each teacher was asked to rate himself or herself, and the principal rated each teacher, on the performance responsibilities on a scale of distinguished, proficient, basic, or unsatisfactory. Once this rating was conducted, a classroom observation was to be conducted, and the teacher was assigned to either the professional development track or the formal track for appraisal. Teachers set their goals and the principal monitored the process with periodic meetings to assess progress toward the attainment of the goals. Teachers on the professional development track were to be monitored over four years, with a yearly report to the district. Teachers on the formal track were monitored over one year with a report to be written.

I examined the elements of the vision to see if there was a relationship to the performance responsibilities in the PPP. As noted in the data compiled in Figure 9, I identified what I considered to be fairly close relationships among the elements of safe and positive learning environment, student-centred learning, enriched opportunities, and high expectations and the performance responsibilities. Further, it was outlined in Figure 9 that there was no clear connection between the elements of pride in heritage or creating global citizens and the performance responsibilities.

The policy-in-action, as represented by the administrative procedures called the PPP, seemed to generally reflect the vision of the Board. Some elements of the vision, however, were not reflected in any direct way in the structure of the PPP.

Policy-in-experience at the Schools

To be useful, an instructional supervision process has to be implemented at the classroom level. The principals and teachers from the two schools had positive attitudes about instructional supervision and believed that they were engaged in the process. All the teacher respondents in each school viewed their principal's role as critical to the process and they liked and appreciated the visits to their classrooms and the formal and informal supervisory interactions. A district that was studied by Tunison (2001) had clearly defined policy on supervision (policy-in-intention) and outlined the expectations for action at the school-based administrator level (policy-in-action), and teachers still reported they were not experiencing supervisory interactions (policy-in-experience). This study seemed to generate a different response.

Kate, the principal at Green Meadows Elementary School, believed in the process of instructional supervision and the PPP. Teachers at GMES saw the PPP process as integrated into their personal professional development program and did not view it as an add-on. Kate, the principal at GMES, had modified the process and adapted it for herself and her school. Every teacher I spoke to at GMES had ownership for the process and the goals that they had developed for their own improvement.

Helga, principal at CDHS, also stated that she was a supporter of instructional supervision. She used the PPP, but saw instructional supervision as broader, encompassing all the duties and responsibilities of a teacher. The teachers at CDHS viewed supervision from a more global perspective. They referred to being observed while being engaged in such activities as art displays and extracurricular activities as a form of supervision. The informal visits to their classrooms, when the principal picked

up the attendance data, were viewed positively. These informal visits were seen as a mechanism for the principal to keep current with what was happening in the school, and also as a form of supervision.

Teachers in both schools felt engaged in the instructional supervisory process. GMES staff referred to the PPP when asked about instructional supervision. CDHS staff members regarded instructional supervision as a wider process linked to all their duties, but they still knew about and were part of the PPP.

Strengths and Weaknesses

Both district level and school level personnel were questioned as to their perceptions about the strengths and weaknesses of the instructional supervision process in MRSB. In the interviews with all participants, the strength named most often was "professional growth". Both district level and school level personnel recognized the focus on professional growth as a strength. Another strength identified by a number of the respondents was the existence of a defined process for instructional supervision through the PPP.

Weaknesses identified were lack of time to implement the program, inconsistency of implementation of the PPP from school to school, and varying ability of administrators to navigate the difficult conversations that can be generated through the process. Weaknesses in the process were mainly identified by district level personnel and the principals.

Vision to Experience

For the purposes of the study, I identified six elements in the vision of the MRSB. Twelve of the fourteen respondents identified only one or two elements when asked to

describe the vision of the Board. Only two participants identified three elements. Even though they did not identify the elements in detail, the respondents seemed to believe that the Board had "a vision" and that they were working toward it. The Superintendent used few words from the vision when I asked him to describe the vision of the Board. He had his own view on the vision and how to actualize it through instructional supervision. The Superintendent was aware of the formal vision and indicated so, but had his own interpretation of it, the wording of which did not directly reflect the wording of the expressed vision of the Board.

The Vision of the Superintendent in Experience

The interview with the Superintendent suggested to me that the chief executive officer of the district had his own interpretation of the vision of the Board. His interpretation of the vision was focused on "Let's go for excellence". He believed that the instructional supervision process, through the PPP, should have been implemented as a way of actualizing the vision of the Board and improving learning for students. His vision focused on each employee continuously trying to improve the way they work on behalf of students.

Policy to Experience

The policy on Personnel Performance was governed by reference to the pursuit of excellence which I have equated to the element from the vision on "high expectations". The policy stated the Board's expectation that the Superintendent implement the PPP, so one could draw the inference that the vision of the Board was to be carried out through the PPP. There was a direct link between the formal policy and practice through the PPP.

The PPP acted as administrative procedures and influenced instructional supervisory practices in the district.

I examined the PPP in experience in the two schools from the perspectives of the principals and the teachers. In GMES, the PPP had been part of the instructional supervisory experience for teachers and principal alike. In CDHS, the teachers and principal were all aware of the PPP and had used it to set goals for improvement, but did not display as much detailed knowledge of the PPP process. If the vision of the Board were actualized through the PPP, it was implemented from a different perspective in the two schools.

Discussion

This study deals with the relationship of vision and supervision in one school district in Eastern Canada. In the schools that were studied, a key factor in the furthering of policy-in-experience seemed to be the role of the principal in bringing policy alive for teachers and students, and this leadership role will be a topic for discussion. "Policy-alive" is an extension to the policy definitions of Guba that I have included based on the interpretation of the findings from the study, and is directly related to the role of the principal in the instructional supervision process.

Three other areas of discussion from the study seem to be linked to the relationship between system vision and supervision. Two of these broad areas are the creation of a community of learners through supervision, and the need for coherence through public sense-making. Finally in this section, it is noted that the formal vision can act as meta-policy of the Board, but through the data I learned there were numerous ideas about the vision and probably multiple effects on policy and practice. For discussion

purposes, I propose that I have uncovered multiple interpretations which I term "implied vision".

The Role of the Principal in Instructional Supervision: Creating "Policy-alive"

Leadership has presented itself as a key factor to emerge from the data, if policy-in-intention is to become policy-in-experience, and be related to the vision of a district. As I sorted through the data and tried to recognize the commonalities and the themes, I noted that the leadership role of the principal was mentioned by virtually every participant in the study, and that it was a theme in the literature as well. The principal's role in instructional supervision is crucial to the success of the process. It is also a key to bringing the vision of a district to life.

The term "policy-alive" has been provided to illustrate the move of the supervision process beyond what happens between teachers and principals as policy-in-experience (Tunison, 2001) to what happens when, because of the supervisory process, teachers change practices leading to improved learning outcomes for students. Instructional leadership of principals through instructional supervision can create policy alive and thereby directly impact on student achievement.

One writer on policy articulated that "policy is a guideline for future discretionary action" (Edward Stringham as cited by Patrick Renihan, personal communication, June 3, 2007). In other words, policy of a board is important, but interpretation is also critical, because it influences the "discretionary actions" of the principals and other educational leaders in the system.

The teachers at Green Meadows Elementary School and Coastal District High School believed that their principals, Kate and Helga respectively, were leaders within

the school and keys to the instructional supervision process. The principals adhered to the principles of the District's policy on instructional supervision, the PPP, but brought an interpretive quality to their work. They modified the process to meet the needs of the school in which they worked. This discretionary action was seen by the respondents to enhance and foster the supervision process.

Discretionary action seems to relate to Dave's comments on "actioning the system" because, as he noted, certain principals used their discretionary authority to implement the policy on supervision as a ritual or not at all. His hope was that the supervision process would be used to improve learning for students, and Kate and Helga were motivated to implement the policy with improved learning as the goal. A deep commitment to instructional leadership and supervision on the part of the principals has been identified by the teachers in the study. The commitment of the principals is an important component in making supervision come alive.

There seems to be support for these findings in the related research. For example, Ebmeier (2003) found that teacher supervision was most effective in improving teacher efficacy if teachers believed that the principal was interested in what happened in their classrooms. Teachers in this study believed that both Kate and Helga were interested in what happened in their classrooms and they had respect for the principal's opinion. Active supervision helps "set the stage" (Ebmeier, 2003, p. 136) but must be accompanied by other principal activities that focus on classroom learning. Further, teacher supervision was seen as one way for a principal to demonstrate commitment to teaching (Ebmeier, 2003).

Active principal supervision has been found to contribute to confidence in the school administration (Ebmeier, 2003). Kate was seen as a key in the process by the teachers at GMES. Teachers referred to conversations with Kate that reassured them that the instructional supervision process was meaningful and relevant to them and to their students. One teacher articulated how well the instructional supervision process was carried out under Kate's leadership and stated that she did not see it as an "add-on" or extra work. However, she pointed to other schools in the district where supervision was not done as well.

The comments of the teachers reflected Glatthorn's (1990) insights on supervision. He believed there must be significant commitment to the supervision process from those involved, especially from those facilitating the process. He said that when there is effective supervision of instruction, administrators, team leaders, and teachers cooperate in the supervisory processes that result in frequent feedback to teachers, focus on instructional improvement, emphasize student achievement, and foster collaboration and cooperation. Sergiovanni and Starratt (2002) referred to supervision of instruction as a task of school-based administrators, and how they not only had to make it a priority, but had to do more than perform it in a ritualistic manner and without meaningful outcomes. They said many principals viewed it as an administrative responsibility rather than a leadership activity. Kate and Helga viewed instructional supervision as a leadership activity.

Kate was dedicated to the Personnel Performance Program process but brought her own interpretation to it through adapting and modifying it for herself and for her school. She brought the process alive through her interpretation. Kate had given the

teachers binders to collect information related to the 14 performance responsibilities in the PPP that could develop into a professional portfolio. She utilized an observation guide for "walk-through" visits that kept her observations focused and related to the 14 performance responsibilities or the goals set through the PPP process. Observations and data were focused on student learning. Time was scheduled at staff meetings for teachers to discuss their teaching goals and the strategies they were using to achieve them. This type of discretionary action brings meaning and relevance to the process of supervision.

When I visited the school, Kate was rarely in her office and my conversations with staff verified that my observations were reflective of her this long term pattern of behaviour. She circulated around the building, was in and out of classrooms, and was frequently having conversations with teachers and students about teaching and learning. Teachers did not resent her visits to their classrooms, but saw them as supportive.

Barager (2000) argued that developmental supervision was an important tool in teacher motivation and Barager's work supported my experience with this study. Her thesis was that developmental supervison, implemented by a principal as a discovery process, was a strong motivator for teachers. Barager linked developmental supervision to transformational leadership. Kate's approach, as Helga's, was developmental and collaborative. The leadership role of the principal is critical in tying instructional supervision to practice.

Helga's interpretation of the policy was different from Kate's, but seemed no less effective. She showed the confidence and maturity to interpret the policy in a manner which helped her to personalize and individualize it. Her role was vital to the process of instructional supervision in the school and affected the attitudes of the teachers. Helga

spoke of supervision in global terms and only referred to the steps in the PPP when asked about them specifically. The vision of the Board, as manifested through the implementation of the PPP, seemed to have a different relationship to policy-in-experience at CDHS. Teachers there experienced instructional supervision globally and referred to their complete role as teachers when referring to it.

Helga had created a culture wherein the teachers were also interpreting the process. They interpreted instructional supervision as related to such functions as extra-curricular activities, communication with parents, and interactions with teachers, students and other staff. When referring to her role in supervision, all the teachers expressed confidence in Helga as a leader and they valued her opinion on instructional issues. Helga was no less committed to the supervision process than Kate, but she framed her comments differently when asked about instructional supervision. She said that there was a formal aspect to it, but also an informal aspect that "encompasses everything you're doing in the school". This interpretation affected her views on many issues. She felt that a positive climate in the school for students was her responsibility and that having high expectations for teachers was a key part of her role. When asked about her role in instructional supervision, as part of her answer she said, "…it is simply, [supervision of] everything that goes on inside the school". She referred to being visible and available to teachers and visible and available to students. A number of teachers, in the formal interviews and in informal discussions, said that teaching did not just take place in the classroom but all around the school and as they performed the various functions of their jobs.

One of the important aspects of Helga's interpretation of the supervision process seemed to be related to visibility. According to the teachers, Helga knew what was happening in the school and she was visible around the school and was available for discussions and support. She was committed to instructional excellence, and the PPP process, but it was in the context of the school as a whole. Teachers appreciated her approach to leadership and viewed her style of being visible as supportive to their work. One of the CDHS teachers described the philosophy of running the school that Helga had presented to the staff. The metaphor was an inverted pyramid, where she was at the bottom supporting the teachers and students, who were at the top, and all feedback and ideas were funneled through Helga.

When asked about the PPP process specifically, all teachers at CDHS described the goal setting process and the monitoring of the goals over a period of the year (or years), depending on the track in the process they were on. They mentioned classroom visitations, but articulated them as largely being informal and ongoing. The PPP was typically a hierarchical process, but Helga had made it collaborative and somewhat informal. Teachers valued Helga's help and support in the process, and thus seemed to accept and welcome her interpretation of instructional supervision.

Reitzug (1997) proposed more empowering images of instructional supervision, portraying teachers and principals as collaborative inquirers, teaching as problematic, and professional development (supervision) as sustained and ongoing. Helga's approach seemed consistent with Reitzug's earlier work. Helga's philosophy was one of being a facilitator and a problem solver. She showed, through her work with the first year teacher in the post conference that she was dedicated to ensuring that there was a high

quality of learning opportunities for students. The staff book study of the DuFour book, which she facilitated and fostered, demonstrated a commitment to collaboration and collaborative practice and helped frame supervision in the context of a learning community.

The findings from the study support the perspective that the principal's role in instructional supervision is critical if supervision is to be a success in a school. Dave, Director of Education Services, said that in his experience it was a challenge getting principals to do supervision, but that they need to make it a priority if professional growth is to be the outcome. As mentioned previously, Dave spoke of "actioning the system" and identified that the principals are key if action is to occur.

Actioning the system is illustrative of policy-alive, and can be interpreted as the call to action to get principals engaged in the supervision process to enhance teaching skills and thus the learning of students. The concept of actioning speaks to leadership in proactive terms and is useful terminology to describe the mobilization of the system toward instructional supervision and achieving policy-alive. Dave's comments seemed to be setting the stage for the principals to conduct the process. His interpretive comments regarding the vision and the supervisory process point to the conclusion that he was encouraging principals to interpret and discern as they approached their work with teachers, but his call to action was clear.

Greg, the Superintendent, commented on the skill level of principals and whether they had the ability to help teachers. He believed that it was important to find and hire principals who had the strength of background and knowledge to help teachers improve their instruction. The ability to take effective discretionary action could be why these

skills are important. Susan, the Area Supervisor, also reflected on the abilities of principals and the effect of those abilities in instructional supervision in the school. She said supervision depended on the individual principal and his or her belief system about instructional leadership, and, if instructional leadership was an area of strength for them and they had a good background in school improvement and assessment, she believed that instructional supervision would be effective in those schools. The data from the study emphasize the need for principals to have skills related to instructional supervision and leadership, and thus the ability to interpret policy and take discretionary action appropriately to improve learning.

The manner in which the principals used their time in GMES and CDHS seems consistent with some of the research on supervision. Varley (2005) conducted a study on supervisory practices and concluded, "By being visible in classrooms via informal and formal observations, the instructional leader can improve teaching and learning through supervision" (p.15). The principals' interpretations of the policy balanced their implementation of the formal policy with the need to build in an informal response. Both principals in the study used both formal and informal visits to classrooms and recognized the importance of both. Varley also said,

> Effective principals spend large amounts of time in classrooms, observing the teaching of academic units, and provide feedback regarding how teachers' effectiveness can be improved. (p. 13)

She concluded that there seems to be a link in recent research among instructional supervision, instructional leadership, and student learning. The principal's role is critical in Varley's interpretation of her data: "Collaborative supervision enables teachers to evaluate their own instructional effectiveness and to solve instructional problems"

(Varley, 2005, p. 17). Accepting that conclusion, a principal can make a significant difference for students through a focus on instructional leadership and supervision. Student learning will benefit through the reflective activities of teachers and resulting enhanced teaching skills. The work of Hurley, Greenblatt, and Cooper (2003) stressed the need for "learning conversations", to transform supervision into a professional learning process. Costa and Garmston (1994) believed reflection, aided by a capable coach, leads to professional growth and improved teaching. A number of studies have examined collaborative supervision as an effective type of supervisory activity (Dell'olio, 1998; Gleave, 1997; Greene, 1992; Hyun & Marshall, 1996; McBride & Skau, 1995; Munson, 1998; Wallace, 1998; Zepeda, 2002; Zepeda & Ponticell, 1998). All of them have found a positive correlation between collaborative supervisory practices and some aspect of teaching or learning success. Marzano (2003) found that teacher skills have the strongest impact on student learning.

In this study, the two principals paid attention to the instructional supervision process and instructional leadership in the schools, albeit in different ways. They were both dedicated to instructional improvement and improved student learning. This study and a number of previous studies have identified the role of the principal as critical in a school, particularly in the process of instructional supervision. The more instructional leadership the principal shows through the supervision process, the more the teachers focus on the teaching and learning process.

Kate and Helga showed a strong set of collaborative skills. As I reexamine the work of Sullivan and Glanz (2000), I note that they stated that supervisory leadership for the 21st century requires a different set of skills: enhanced collaborative relationships,

participatory decision-making, reflective listening and practice, and teacher self-direction. It is evident from the data that teachers constructed their own meaning from the supervision process, but their construction of reality was influenced by their principal.

Teachers in the schools studied shared the general orientations of their principals toward instructional supervision. In GMES, they were committed to the adapted and modified version of the PPP as interpreted and fostered by Kate. In CDHS they were familiar with the PPP process, but tended to see instructional supervision more globally and reflecting all activities of a teacher, including extra-curricular activities, as did Helga. Thus, the interpretations and the discretionary actions of the principals contributed to the interpretations of the teachers and their attitude toward the instructional supervision process.

In summary, the findings from the study seem to be supported by a body of related research. Kate and Helga both demonstrated strong instructional leadership and this leadership was reflected in the respect held for them by the teachers and in the changes the teachers made to their practices. The change they fostered in teacher behaviour through their commitment to professional growth could directly enhance student learning, creating policy-alive.

A Community of Learners through Supervision

The vision of the Board in the area of personnel performance was implemented through the policy-in-action, the Personnel Performance Program, Instructional/Teacher (PPP). The PPP had a clear set of processes and structures. Those processes were enacted between the principal and the teacher who worked together on the instructional supervision process. In the two schools in the study, the process seemed to be

“morphing” into one that embraced the philosophy of a professional learning community (DuFour, 2004, DuFour & Eaker, 1998, Hargreaves, 2003).

Concepts of professional learning communities (PLCs) were evident in the data. At CDHS, the PLC philosophy had been starting to grow, but was still in a fledgling stage. One teacher at CDHS referred to a group study of a book by DuFour in which some of the staff at CDHS had been engaged. Teachers involved in the book study each gave a mini-lesson to the staff and took a role in teaching about the book. A teacher said the book showed Helga’s (and the Board’s) philosophy and how the staff should be operating. Sylvia referred to learning about PLCs through the book study as a “broader” kind of supervision.

Helga promoted and fostered the book study group and seemed to encourage the PLC philosophy. The PLC philosophy seemed to be growing at CDHS, and initiatives such as the book study were helping to nurture it. I attended one meeting after school at CDHS involving all of the grade seven teachers and the vice principal, with the principal sitting in as an observer. Attendees were collaboratively solving some instructional issues regarding the grade seven students. While the process was led by the vice principal, the teachers were willing participants, and the principal showed her support for this collaborative endeavour through her presence. This process was consistent with the PLC philosophy, but was not reflected in the formal policy of the district.

Kate, principal at GMES, introduced some modifications and adaptations to the PPP process that were appropriate for her school and her leadership style, and that were consistent with building a PLC. She had given each teacher a binder with 14 sections based on the performance responsibilities from the PPP. She also had built time into staff

meetings to offer teachers the opportunity to share what they had learned through the pursuit of their goals. The objective of having the binders was that teachers could develop them into professional portfolios that could facilitate sharing among teachers. Kate structured a process into staff meetings for collaboration based on the instructional supervision process. This time was an opportunity for teachers to work together as a professional learning community to discuss instructional issues in the school.

PLCs put a premium on teachers working together, but they also require that this joint work consistently focus on teaching and learning, and that it use evidence and data as a basis for improving classroom instruction and informing school improvement discussions (Hargreaves, 2003). Kate consistently asked teachers to document the attainment of their goals through the collection of data (personal communication, April 28, 2006).

Sackney and Mitchell (2002) made the case that teaching and learning are at the heart of leadership. They said, "Leading is not about telling others what to do but rather about opening spaces for people to learn about what matters to them" (p. 909). Kate had definitely "opened space" for the teachers to discuss teaching and learning (Duffy, 2000, p. 142). A community of learners has been described as a group working in an environment that is nurturing, supportive, understanding, and challenging, while sharing a mutual understanding and commitment to its own development and the development of children (Senge et al., 1995). This philosophy seemed to be what Kate was trying to foster with her staff at GMES.

Kate's work was consistent with findings from the related literature. DuFour (1997; 2004) argued that in schools functioning as learning communities, teachers are

guided by a shared purpose and take collective responsibility for student learning. DuFour (2004) and DuFour and Eaker (1998) advocated a culture of collaboration within a professional learning community. PLCs are characterized by powerful collaboration through a systemic process in which teachers worked together to analyze and improve their classroom practice (DuFour 2004; DuFour & Eaker, 1998). Kate's orientation to her professional staff seems consistent with the work of DuFour.

Without specific direction of the district, Kate was using the PPP process as a mechanism to develop a professional learning community. Pajak (2000) suggested that such processes were a trend in the development of supervisory theory. The portfolios seemed to be an excellent tool for fostering discussion and building linkages among the teachers at GMES. When they brought the binders to the staff meetings, there was a basis for the discussion with their colleagues. They had the opportunity to use the data they collected to support the attainment of their goals and to generate discussion and learning among their peers.

The Midlands Regional School Board had sent all of its principals to a workshop on professional learning communities conducted by Richard and Rebecca DuFour (and others) in May of 2006; thus the principals were familiar with the concept of PLCs. Although the instructional supervision policy-in-action of the Board, as reflected in the PPP, was a supervisor-centred approach to supervision, the philosophy seemed to be changing and the study showed that schools were adapting with the recent change in direction.

Good leaders build structures to enhance the learning of students through collaborative processes with their staff (DuFour, 2004). Kate used the instructional

supervision process, the PPP, to help her structure the learning opportunities for her staff. Helga fostered collaborative processes which were interpreted as part of the supervision process by her teachers.

The Need for Coherence: Public Sense-making

There was one formal vision for the Midlands Regional School Board. When I interviewed the selected district-based and school-based staff there was, however, a considerable difference in how the vision was interpreted, even by senior officials in the system. This variation led me to ask the question: If there were such differences in interpretation of the vision, how could it have been actualized in a consistent manner? This study was to examine the relationship between expressed vision and instructional supervisory practices (policy-in-experience). How could there be a connection between the formal vision and the policy-in-experience if people interpreting the vision had such different perceptions?

Greg, the Superintendent, framed his interpretation of the mission/vision succinctly as, “Let’s go for excellence”. I could not see this interpretation as directly related to the expressed mission/vision of the Board, except as related to one element of the vision on high expectations. In general principle, however, I cannot state that “going for excellence” is contrary to anything in the vision of the Board. From our discussions, I came to believe that Greg saw himself as implementing the vision of the Board.

Dave, the Director of Education Services, also had a succinct summary of the mission/vision. He framed it as, “Maximize individual student learning”. Dave also mentioned some other elements of the mission/vision, but he ended with his four word summary again as he concluded his answer on the vision of the Board. As I examined

this response, I was perplexed that two of the highest officials in the district did not directly reflect the mission/vision of the Board in their answers. However, I could not see in Dave's case (as in Greg's) how his framing of the vision was in contradiction with the vision of the Board. The work of Leithwood and others is instructive in examining this issue.

Leithwood et al. (1999) conducted a study that focused on the setting of direction by leadership through building a shared vision, developing consensus about goals, and creating high performance expectations. It was assumed that a vision or mission statement would have no impact unless there was commitment to it by those affected by it. Leithwood et al. concentrated on how such commitment could be created. They found that leaders who helped the organization to identify and articulate a vision helped to identify new opportunities for the organization.

Greg and Dave articulated a vision in their own words. This may have been their attempt to bring meaning to the formal vision statement. "If a leader moves from the superficial to the profound, and does so publicly, so much the better. Public sensemaking demonstrates the struggle for sense is a shared struggle" (Weick, 2007, p. 1). Greg said he wanted to "move past the wordy mission statement" and then he articulated his own take on the vision, "Let's go for excellence". Dave used the phrase "Maximize individual student learning". In the field notes, I noted the clarity with which these two men expressed their visions. Sashkin (1995) identified three characteristics of visionary leadership. One characteristic consisted of creating an ideal vision of the organization and its culture. Another was defining an organizational philosophy that *succinctly* states the vision, and developing programs and policies that put the philosophy into practice

within the organization's unique culture and context. The third characteristic was the leader's personal practices on a one-to-one basis in order to create and support the vision. When discussing his vision, Greg referred to his personal practices and his modeling of the supervision process. Dave spoke of actioning the system. He felt it was his job to ensure that principals conducted the supervisory process.

Greg and Dave seemed to see their role as getting the vision into action and ensuring that the supervisory process took place in the district. In the interviews they indicated the need to put their own "spin" on the vision, in order to make it practical and meaningful to themselves and others. When asked what influenced his ability to implement the policy on supervision, Greg said, "Well, the positive is back to that one word "vision" that's what should be hitting you every day." This was a follow-up to his comments where he said:

> I want to go beyond that wordy mission statement that everybody has. I think what I've tried to promote is the notion of excellence… So let's push forward with that as the vision for the Region… The Personnel Performance Program is one component of that in achieving excellence as it offers an opportunity for folks to see where they are today and what kind of progress they make on that journey. That may be a long-winded answer, but that's kind of a capsule. Let's go for excellence.

Dave said:

> The vision of School Board in my mind boils down to this: "Maximize individual student learning". I usually frame it with those four words, and I've done that for some time. Student learning is the focus… My role is more in ensuring that we are using the system (of teacher supervision), that we're implementing the system and being supportive of the importance of having that system and doing what I can to push forward implementation.

What implications do these interpretations by senior staff have for the mission/vision of the Board? One implication might be that the mission/vision should be reviewed periodically. Not only did it need to be the vision of the Board, but it needed to

be the vision of such key actors in the district as the Superintendent and the Director of Education Services. More input from senior staff when the vision is reviewed and a broader collaborative process across the district might solidify the vision in people's minds. There might also be some direct reference to the achievement of the vision in the appraisal process for the Superintendent.

I broke the vision into six key elements, which, when presented in its regular format, was several sentences long. In order to make the vision practical and usable, perhaps there needs to be a succinct summary in the form of a statement, phrase, or motto that could summarize or distill the essence of the vision, similar to the catch phrases used by Greg and Dave or as suggested by Sashkin (1995). Defining a phrase or motto could help to give senior administrators a mechanism to summarize the vision and help alleviate the perceived need to define their own version of the vision.

Multiple Interpretations or "Implied Vision"?

The work of Karl Weick (2007) on sense-making in organizations provides a valuable perspective. Weick explained that from his studies he has found that when people find something unexplained within an organization that the first impulse is to grasp for any explanation. He said, "We often find the initial meaning of events by drawing inferences from how we feel" (p. 1). Weick explained that leaders are just as susceptible to these tendencies as anyone else in the organization.

I found that people who worked in MRSB quickly verbalized what they believed to be the vision and direction of the Board, but that there was not a direct match between the formal vision and what people said. The respondents all had an answer for what they believed to be the vision of the board, but they did not directly articulate the formal

vision or anything really close to it. The tone and spirit of the interviews told me that the interviewees believed, however, that they were in sync with the district and what it was trying to achieve.

Vision seemed to guide the direction of the staff in the district whether it was formally stated or not. There was an "implied vision" demonstrated through the programs and actions of the Board, the interpretation of the vision by its key officials, and through the procedures associated with its policies. The Board was moving ahead with positive, effective behaviour supports (PEBS) as an approach to codifying and systematizing approaches to building a positive school culture. Schools had developed codes of conduct such as the one I saw for CDHS.

The teachers and administrators referred to the number of professional development opportunities that were made available to them. Comments such as these were made throughout the interviews: "I've had some great professional development opportunities", "I got to be on a lead team of teachers where we went and we were trained with the first Provincial Oral Reading Record Assessment", "For me, not only did I get to learn a lot but I also had the opportunity to share with other teachers which is a really good development opportunity" and "When you do professional development, in-service, a conference, a meeting after school, you always have a "heads up" on your goal, on your focus (from the PPP)". The teachers believed that there was a focus on a safe climate and on learning opportunities. Six of the people in the study mentioned "life-long learning" as a component of the Board's vision, but it was not. In examining the interview transcripts, I note that they believe that the skills they teach are to last a lifetime.

The implied vision was fostered by the Superintendent's version of the vision. There was also the stated vision of the Director of Education Services. Actions of the district could also contribute to what I mean by the concept of implied vision. An example of this was that the Board sent all of its principals to a workshop on professional learning communities. The Superintendent passed up a provincial meeting to attend this workshop in order to show support for this initiative (personal communication, May, 2006). Principals began to interpret this desire for PLCs as the direction of the Board and started to implement the principles of the work of DuFour (1997) in their schools.

Judging from the variety of interpretations of the vision, there seems to be a need to state the formal vision clearly and succinctly, and then encourage continuing dialogue and communication that can encourage interchange and tacit understanding of the elements of the expressed vision of the system. Weick elaborated on this point when he wrote, "People don't discover sense, they create it, which means they need conversations with others to move forward some shared idea of what meanings are possible" (Weick, 2007, p. 2).

The implied vision appeared to be associated with the expressed vision, but tended to be what people could remember or make sense of. Both the expressed vision and the implied vision had an impact on the formulation and interpretation of policies and on the actions that were taken in the schools. The implied vision was not based on one statement or action, but a combination of actions, directives, policies, and statements, and interpretations of them, made over a period of time. The implied vision may have in some ways become easier to remember and articulate than the expressed vision of the Board, and it seemed to make sense to the people who were interviewed. Differential

interpretations of the vision were communicated in the actions of the Board and through the words and actions of its senior officials.

The existence of the possibility of implied vision strengthens the point made in the last topic for discussion. If vision can influence all the actions in a system, it seems vital that Boards and districts collaboratively develop a clear, succinct, and memorable vision, and then enter into a continuous dialogue and process of communication with the educational community in the district related to the vision, in order to keep it at the forefront.

Vision to Practice: A Heuristic

As I examined and interpreted the link between instructional supervision and vision, it seemed that a piece was missing. There was no effective structure to enhance the relationship between vision and the practices of the district. With that in mind, the conceptual framework for the study has been reconceptualized to act as the basis for a framework for an idealized relationship between vision and practice. Obviously, as Pal (1992) observed, perfection is neither possible nor even desirable in putting vision as a policy driver into practice. Perfection may not be attainable, but the examination of an ideal model may help with conceptualization (Pal, 1992).

A researcher cannot deny his or her own need to interpret the data and to look for meaning in that interpretation. Peshkin (1988) noted that researchers should constantly identify their own subjectivity. Various interpretations have influenced the direction I have taken in writing about my findings and have led me to a *heuristic*, with two applications, that encapsulates a model for implementation of vision into action. I worked from a hermeneutic/interpretive epistemology, on the basis of the assumption that

social research is concerned with interpretation, meaning, and illumination. This assumption also holds that all sense-seeking is from an interpretive framework and that all knowledge is perspective-bound and partial (Usher, 1996). As I reviewed some literature and looked at the results of my research, what became clearer as this study progressed was the need to recognize the concept of "double hermeneutics", in that I was interpreting information that was in itself an interpretation given by the administrators and teachers with whom I interacted (Peshkin, 2000).

One significant point that emerged from this study was that there was an indirect connection between vision and supervisory practices; however, there was a common perception that good things were happening in supervision in these schools. I found that the supervision practices and the policy in the district were somewhat related to the vision, but that the knowledge of the vision was tentative at best. The interviews identified that no respondent identified more that three of the six elements of the vision and most identified one or two elements. The administrative procedures and the policy seemed to drive practice, but the vision was indirectly connected.

There were various perceptions on what the Board believed. These interpretations seemed to be drawn from the actions of the Board, certain procedures and practices that were in place, and the interpretations of the vision as stated by senior staff. Sometimes these seemed to bear little resemblance to the formal vision statement. What might explain these apparent inconsistencies? In this section, I bring forward points of discussion from the findings which serve to identify a variety of mediating factors that help to redress the disjunctions and clarify my interpretations.

In the two schools studied, I note that supervision was making a difference for the teachers and for the students. Teachers reported changes in their instructional practices that were initiated through the instructional supervision process, and reported that these changes were positively affecting the learning of students. The leadership provided by the principals seemed to be a key to the success of the supervision practices in the schools. Teachers who had previously taught at other schools reported that the supervision policy was implemented differently or not at all in those environments. The Superintendent and the Director of Educational Services believed the success of the supervision process in the district was related to their ability to go about actioning the system through the work of the principals.

A Heuristic

Based upon this discussion, I propose a *heuristic* with two applications (see Figures 10 and 11). Heuristics have been identified as belonging to the pragmatist, realist tradition (Haig, 1999). A heuristic does not guarantee a correct solution, rather "it recognizes the rational behaviour of the researcher as satisficer – given the limitations of temporal, computational and memorial constraints of the research process" (Haig, 1999, p. 299). It can be thought of as the visualization of an interpretive process, helping us to clarify our interpretations.

A heuristic, conceptually, is an interpretive framework, and it can help to clarify interpretations and give a positive diagrammatic representation of beliefs. Human

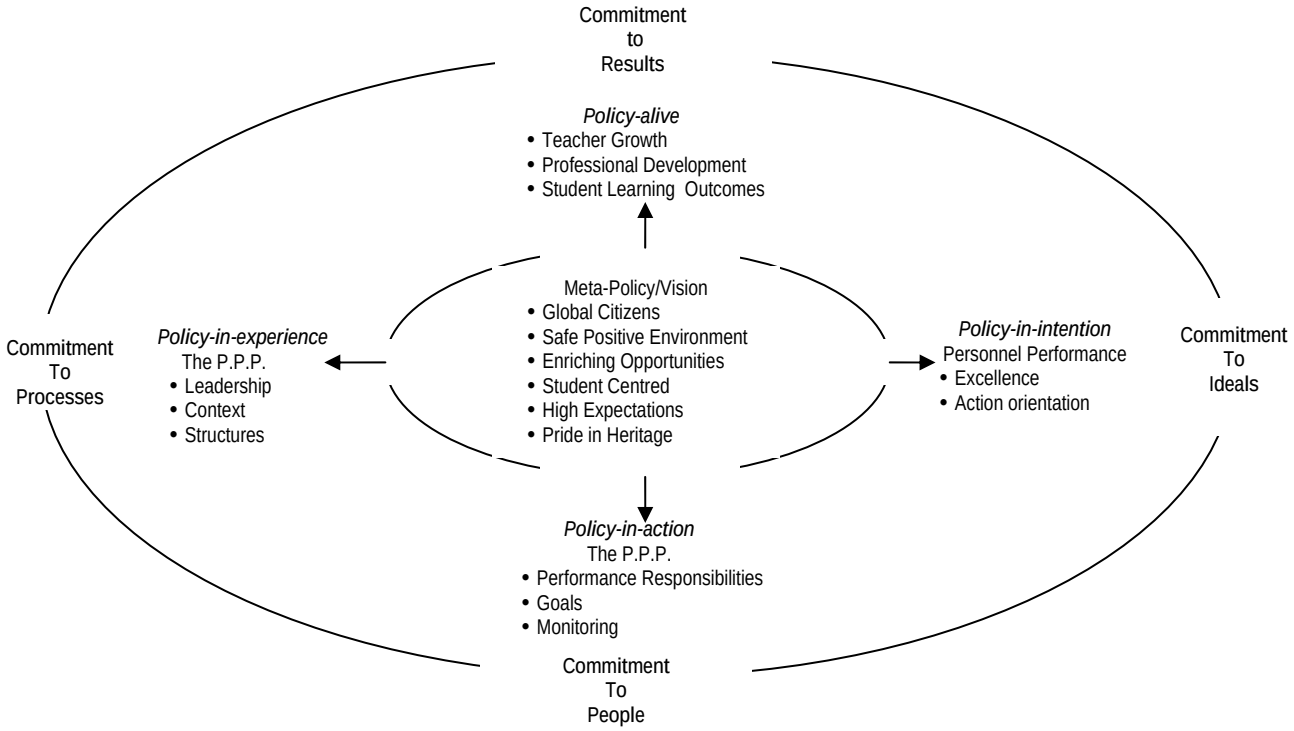

Figure 10. MRSB Vision: From Ideals to Results.

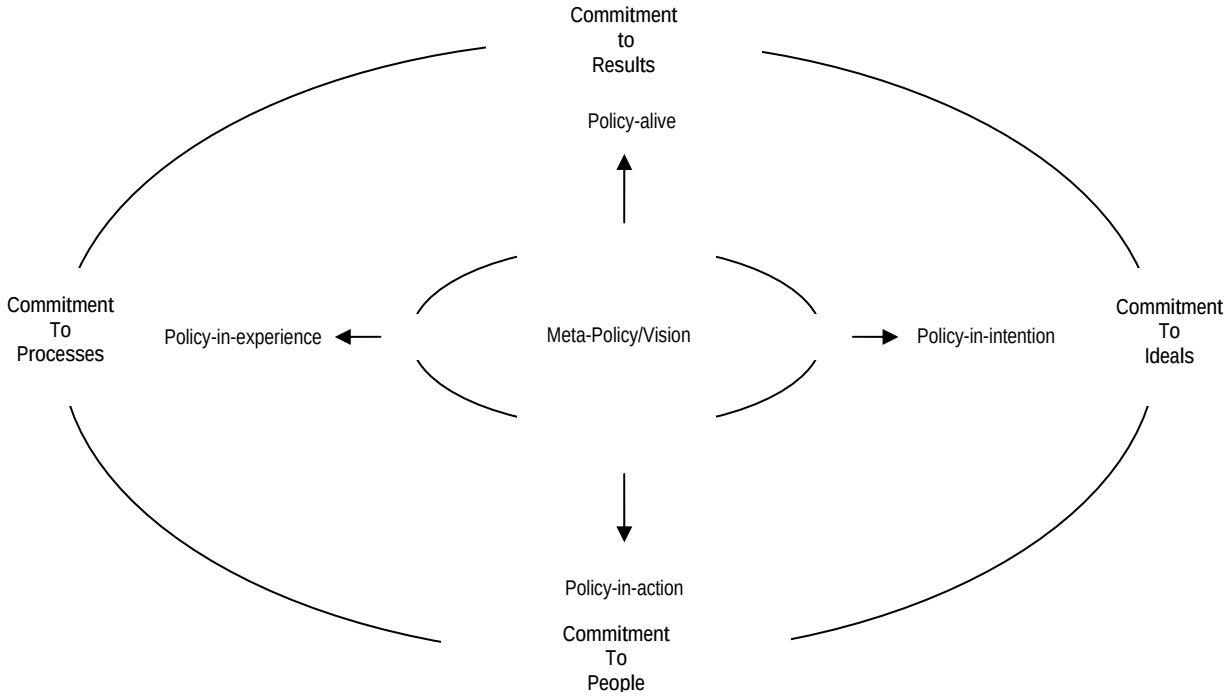

Figure 11. Vision: From Ideals to Results.

action is given meaning by interpretive schemes or frameworks (Peshkin, 2000) and it follows from this that researchers seek to make sense of what is being researched and do so through interpretive schemes and frameworks. An important characteristic of hermeneutic interpretation is that it always takes place against a background of assumptions and presuppositions (Peshkin, 2000). In short, I use this heuristic to give diagrammatic clarity to my interpretations.

At the heart of a school board's beliefs is its vision. This vision should influence all of the policies of the Board and the actions in the system. This perspective is shown in diagrammatic form in relation to the instructional supervision processes in MRSB (see Figure 10) and then in another application as a more generic model (see Figure 11). The heuristic has the **vision** at the centre, extending its influence upon the various forms and stages of policy, each of which represents a focus for commitment. It is surrounded by the policy definitions of Guba and my addition of policy-alive, and the implication is that vision impacts on all of these types of policy. ***Policy-in-intention***, I suggest, is a *commitment to ideals*. ***Policy-in-action*** is fundamentally related to a *commitment to people*, through fairness and equity. Actions of the leaders in the system dictate the patterns of ***policy-in-experience,*** which are connected to *a commitment to processes***.** Finally, the diagram identifies ***policy-alive***, which refers to the impact on teacher behaviour leading to student achievement, or a *commitment to results.* The following is a deeper interpretation of the elements of this heuristic.

Meta Policy/Vision

One of the assumptions for this study is that vision can act as meta-policy for a board or a district. Downey (1988) said that effective meta-policy can help avoid

inconsistencies in the operation of a board. Fullan (1997) noted, "An organization, to be effective, needs both a vision of the nature and content that it represents, and the processes it characteristically values and follows" (p. 34). Fullan stated that vision must not be confined to a privileged few, but must grow from the collective views of a variety of sources. Fullan's work seems closely related to the writing of Peel and McGary (1997), who stated that a vision in a school system only has power for those who can see it. Peel and McGary affirmed that a vision cannot be created in isolation and must be continuously communicated by the leaders of the organization. They articulated this clearly when they said, "The vision must become part of the belief system of individuals and play itself out in their behaviour" (Peel & McGary, 1997, p. 698).

While the vision and how it is developed are important, how it is *communicated* is also important. Leaders in organizations must consistently communicate the vision and make it available for all to see. In the study, what I found was an implied vision that seemed to guide the actions of personnel, and the formal vision of the Board was not clear to the teachers or the system leaders. In fact, key leaders in the system, when asked to state the vision, provided only a partial interpretation and a summary unrelated to the elements of the vision. The leaders were not communicating the expressed vision of the Board clearly to others in the organization.

At the centre of both applications of the heuristic is the ***vision***, or ***meta-policy***. This vision should be collaboratively developed and represent the core beliefs of the Board that have an impact on all other aspects of the organization. In the case of the Midlands Regional School Board, the six key components of the vision: global citizenship, safe positive environment, enriching opportunities, student centredness, high

expectations, and pride in heritage are the considerations intended to drive all aspects of the operation of the system including policy, procedures, experiences, and actions.

This heuristic represents a model that supports understanding by representing graphically how philosophy and vision can be connected to supervisory praxis. Vision can have a substantial influence on practice in a school district, and collaborative, growth-oriented, professional development, enacted through collegial supervisory practices, can have a direct impact on student learning. This direct relationship is the fulfillment of the model connecting vision and supervision.

I examine the four policy definitions below as a model for relating vision to learning through instructional supervision practices.

Policy-in-intention

It can be argued that the wishes of school boards are expressed mainly through their formal policies or ***policy-in-intention***. Policies are a mediating factor between vision and practice. Many provincial education acts throughout Canada require boards to develop policies that guide the work of staff in the system. Carver (1990) interpreted policies as expressing the key beliefs of boards and outlining parameters for the work of staff, particularly the CEO.

There were some key commitments to supervision in MRSB and these commitments were largely manifested through the formal policy on Personnel Performance (policy-in-intention) of the Board. Based on the data collected, I have summarized the two key foci as *excellence* and *action orientation*. These represent a *commitment to ideals*.

The people interviewed believed that the Board had a general philosophical orientation. It is my contention that the ideals of a Board are stated through its policies. Policies flesh out the philosophy of the Board and define the parameters for the actions of the staff. The policy manual of the MRSB was replete with philosophical statements on various topics. Examples of these statements are, "The Midlands Regional School Board recognizes that effective communications are a critical component of a successful school system" and "The Midlands Regional School Board is committed to providing the best education possible for students attending Regional schools". However, in keeping with the foregoing discussion, all of these philosophical statements should be driven by the vision of the system.

If vision acts as meta-policy, as has been assumed for purposes of this study, then it will provide consistency in policy development and avoid the problems that come with the exigencies of time and Board changes. Vision, as a general statement of principle, should be the yardstick against which all policies are written.

Policy-in-action

Policy-in-action is the administrative procedures of the board. In this case, it is the Personnel Performance Program Instructional/Teacher (PPP). Procedures provide the structure to move policies toward action. It is important that administrative procedures outline the expectations of staff in the implementation of policies. As boards work through policy development, many of them authorize their CEOs to approve written administrative procedures that take the policies into practice (Carver, 1990). The vision of the Board needs to be reflected in the procedures, as it is in the policies. Written procedures should be consistent with the vision of the system.

With respect to instructional supervision in the MRSB, the *policy-in-action*, the Personnel Performance Program, delineated the procedures of the supervisory processes. It expressed expectations through the *performance responsibilities*, worked for improvement through the setting of *goals* related to the tasks of the teacher, and expressed the need for *monitoring* and reporting by the principal. This was a *commitment to people*.

Administrative procedures outline the commitments to people through procedures that are fully respectful of the policies and driven by the vision of the Board. The MRSB had some policies which clearly outline this expectation. One, on community education, was as follows.

> To this end, the Board expects the Superintendent of Schools (or designate) to prepare, implement and monitor procedures such that community education initiatives and community education partnership activities are consistent with the vision, values and goals of the Board (MRSB Policy Manual, 2006).

The clarity with which the Midlands Regional School Board spoke through this policy indicated that it believed that both policies and procedures should be driven by the vision. However, there was a disconnect in the data tying vision to practice. Procedures seem to drive practice more directly than the vision. The vision is only partially connected to the administrative procedures.

The Board effectively expected the Superintendent to implement the policy through procedures that are clear, as were the procedures in the PPP. The philosophy of the Board, as expressed through its vision, values, and goals, was to be manifested through procedures that were consistent with this philosophical base. This direct connection was the ideal, but the data show that only some of the performance expectations were related to the vision and there were some significant gaps.

All Boards can learn from this approach of attempting to link vision to practice, but the indirect link is interesting and proposes a challenge. Procedures that are consistent with the vision are integral to maintaining consistency of philosophical approach throughout the system. The MRSB had administrative procedures on student discipline, student behaviour, community education, and teacher supervision. In each case, the vision and principles were stated to be the underlying philosophy of the procedures and the policy. This proposed connection is where there seemed to be a disjunction. Integrating vision into policy and procedures means that the vision has to be clear to all participants. People in the MRSB did not quote the vision directly and were not consistent in the interpretation of its meanings.

Of the 14 people who were interviewed in MRSB, none were able to identify all six elements, and only two identified three of the six elements of the vision when asked to state the vision of the Board. Six identified two and six identified only one element of the vision. The last two groups included the Board chair (two elements), and the Superintendent (one). While the policies called for the vision to be integrated, the people in the district did not know the vision as clearly as they believed they did, or as closely as the policies suggested. Why was that the case? There seemed to be some drift from the original vision to what I have termed *implied vision*.

How do leaders keep this drift from occurring? The system must keep the vision central and in the minds of the people of the district. I would suggest that the vision needs to be succinct and clearly visible in the daily work environment within the system. There have been attempts in other districts to communicate the vision by creating posters and having those visible in schools, classrooms, on websites, and in offices. However,

the leaders in such districts must communicate the vision regularly, encourage its discussion frequently during professional development activities and all meetings when large groups of staff or parents are together. Studies have shown that in districts that conduct such activities the teachers and administrators and even local parent council members were aware of the vision (Gulka, 1992; McNamara, 2003).

If the vision is to be a driving factor in all policies and procedures, there must be efforts for collaboratively developing it, communicating it, reviewing, and discussing it. These policies and procedures are "mediating forces" and seem to be central to any model of implementation.

Policy-in-experience

The role of key leaders in the system is crucial to the translation of the vision into experience. The Superintendent believed in modeling the supervision process by having the Board assess itself, having the Board conduct appraisals of him, and conducting appraisals of the people who reported to him. The Director of Education Services took responsibility for actioning the system to encourage the principals to conduct supervision activities. However, both of them observed, as did the Coordinator of Human Resources, that the process was being conducted more regularly by some principals than it was by others, and that it was done better by some principals than it was by others.

When I examine the ***policy-in-experience***, I note from the commentary of the teachers and others, that the implementation of instructional supervision was driven by the principal. The strength of the instructional supervision process was dependent on the commitment within the building, which was largely expressed by the principal, but also through the principal to other staff. *Leadership* was important at the building and the

system level, but the role of the principal was critical. The school *context* was also important. What might work in a small elementary school may or may not work in a larger high school. The schools in the study were quite different in size and grade structure; although there were some similarities (for example both were in rural areas). The *structures* put in place at the school level were important. Such innovations as the binders based on the performance responsibilities at GMES, or the principal touching base with each teacher in the morning while collecting attendance, were actions to which I could refer in this regard. This was a *commitment to processes*.

In this study, I found that the principals were implementing the policy and procedures of supervision and they were bringing their own flavour to it based on the individual philosophies that they held and their interpretation of the Board's vision. Supervision within a community of learners was not within the procedures, but both principals were adapting the supervisory process with PLCs as a consideration.

The Board, through the Superintendent and other key leaders, had sent all the principals in the system to a workshop by the DuFours in which professional learning communities were stressed as a professional development structure for a school. While the formal vision did not change, and the written procedures for supervision did not change, the process had adapted through adjustments by what the Board and key leaders had stressed through their actions. Both principals perceived themselves to be operating in harmony with the Board and the key leaders in the system.

This type of innovation is not necessarily a negative but can be what Barker (Personal Communication, March, 2001) described as creativity "on the fringes" of an

organization with a vision. As long as the activity is still consistent with the vision, the creativity can make the organization better and stronger.

Policy-alive

Usher (1996) said, "An important characteristic of the hermeneutic interpretation is that it always takes place against a background of assumptions and presuppositions, beliefs and practices" (p. 19). Lincoln (1995) said, "My own position is that conversations…are important to the interpretivist community, if for no better reason than to engage and elaborate a complex and interesting dialogue and to create a space for a shared discourse" (p. 3).

In his commentary about the nature of interpretation, Peshkin (2000) said, "an important reason for reflecting on the development of an interpretation is to show the way a researcher's self, or identity in a situation, intertwines with his or her understanding of the object of the investigation" (p. 5). He also said, "We are not indifferent to the subjects of our inquiries" (Peshkin, 2000, p. 6). Before any action, interaction, or process in a school system can be considered to be useful, the action, interaction or process must make the system better for students and have an impact on student learning.

Results in a school system should be measured directly in relation to student learning, and teacher skills are the most significant factor affecting variations in student learning (Marzano, 2003). To have a meaningful influence on a school system, vision and supervisory behaviours must have an impact on student learning. How does that occur?

I have discussed the impact of vision on policy-in-intention, policy-in-action, and policy-in-experience. If *results* are to be affected by vision, there must be clear policies

reflecting the vision of the system. Procedures must then be developed that are based on the philosophy expressed in the policy and the vision. Leaders in the system then put the procedures into action driven through their commitment to professional development through supervisory practices.

Policy-alive is suggested to complement the policy definitions of Guba (1984). I have taken his work one step further than policy-in-experience, which was interpreted to be in the experience of the teachers in the system (Tunison, 2001). Policy-alive is intended to express the impact on student learning through development of teacher skills. Recent studies on teacher supervision (Florence, 2005; Hillyer, 2003; Varley, 2005) have shown supervision can have an influence on teacher skills and Marzano's (2003) meta-study of factors affecting student learning showed that teacher skills are the most significant factor in influencing the learning of students.

In both applications of the heuristic, I have suggested that to close the circle, to bring commitment to fulfillment, there needs to be a focus on ***policy-alive***. The outcome of consistency among policy-in-intention, policy-in-action, policy-in-experience, and policy-alive should be improved *results*. A *commitment to results* refers to *teacher growth*, staff-based *professional development*, and improved *student learning outcomes*.

The principal of Green Meadows Elementary School looked for evidence that supervision was improving the learning of students. She asked teachers to collect data that proved the changes that they were making in instructional practice were making a difference in the classroom. This focus on evidence was consistent with the work of DuFour (2004), DuFour and Eaker, (1998) and Marzano (2003).

To prove that vision has an impact on student learning, there should be data to support that conclusion. That data must document teacher skill development encouraged through the supervisory process. Vision can drive student learning if it drives policy based on the vision, and if the policy supports administrative procedures that reflect the philosophy of the board. The administrative procedures become the basis of the commitment of the principal (and other key leaders) who then take supervision into the school and into the classroom to influence the work of teachers and the learning of students.

Implications for Leadership Action

In this section, I examine implications for leadership action within a school district. I present them in relation to implications for policy, practice, theory, and further research.

Implications for Policy

What is the purpose for a board to have a vision? The literature suggests that the vision represents a compelling purpose for the organization. If the vision does represent a compelling purpose, then keeping that vision in the minds of the people in the system should be considered. If the vision is in the minds of those developing policies and procedures, then there should be alignment with the vision. The study indicated that there was a direct connection between procedures and practice, but a more tenuous connection between vision and practice. The study also indicated that policies, with the support of administrative procedures have considerable impact on implementation.

Keeping the Vision at the Forefront

Pal (1992) looked at the issue of perfect policy implementation. He made the point that no policy can be designed in such a way as to contain every administrative detail. This point was reinforced by the results of the study in that that the Personnel Performance Plan strongly influenced the supervision practices in the two schools, but perceptions and practices were found to be quite varied and influential. Pal went on to say that policy-makers have to rely on others to put their proposals into action. If Pal's premise is accepted, then the need for philosophical clarity is even more important. Policies may not be carried out in detail, but the philosophy behind those policies and procedures may have a guiding influence, as was suggested in the MRSB policy manual. A vision can provide philosophical clarity, according to Fullan (1997), Lambert (2003) and others and it can act as meta-policy to provide consistency in policy development.

The expressed vision of the Board in this study was not known to the staff of the Board. The mission/vision of the Board had six elements and was written in several sentences. Perhaps the mission/vision was too long. According to Sashkin (1995), and examining the study by McNamara (2003), it may be wise to condense the vision down to a phrase that could be similar to a motto, which would summarize the components of the vision. If a board collaboratively developed a mission, vision, and guiding principles they could be condensed into poster format. This poster could be put into every classroom in the district. The phrase or motto could be used on literature and other symbols of the district. Implementation will be fostered if participants are all operating with the same information, which they perceive in the same way (Pal, 1992).

If a vision is to act as meta-policy, guiding the formation of all policies, it would have to be clear and well known. The vision would need to be an ever present factor as policies and procedures are created and therefore needs to be visible and in daily thought.

Policy into Action

The data indicated that policy has an impact on practice if there is a mechanism to put the policy into action. In this study, the policy of the MRSB on Personnel Performance stated that there should be another document, the Personnel Performance Program, written to actualize the policy or put it into practice.

The PPP that was created had a significant influence on practice and experience. It is important, therefore, for boards to empower staff to put procedures in place to implement policies, and then hold the staff accountable for implementation of the policies. Policies without operating procedures will not likely affect practice. This is true because levels of commitment, perceptions of urgency, and capacity will vary widely among actors (Pal, 1992, p. 175).

Updating Procedures that Implement Policy

The procedures of the PPP had been established for several years; however the process had not kept up with the trend for staffs to work as part of a professional learning community. It is important for policy and procedures to be reviewed regularly so that they reflect current thinking and practice. Implementation of policy is evolution, according to Pal (1992). "The beginning of wisdom on implementation is the understanding that it is both difficult and experiential" (Pal, 1992, p. 177). The philosophy of the district seemed to be evolving and this change needed to be reflected in procedures of the system, including instructional supervision.

The MRSB had sent all of its principals to a workshop on professional learning communities and this workshop had been having an impact on the district. Some of the staff at CDHS had conducted a book study of a book by DuFour. Teachers at CDHS had been conducting training for the rest of the staff on the philosophy of working together as part of a PLC.

At GMES, Kate had instituted binders sectioned off into the 14 performance responsibilities that teachers were building into professional portfolios, and the teachers took time at staff meetings to discuss their learning and their work toward the achievement of their professional goals. Kate had structured time at staff meetings for the staff to work together as part of a larger group that DuFour might have called a PLC, Sackney and Mitchell might have called a "community of learners", and Wenger might have called a "community of practice".

The process to write the PPP took three years and there was a broad base of commitment to the program in the district because of the collaborative processes that were used to create it. Perhaps there should have been some kind of a review process for the PPP built into the document and perhaps other districts could also learn from this strategy and could structure review processes into their policies and procedures.

Is there a need for a form of intelligence where the Board is in touch with the field to identify how practices are evolving? I propose that this information exchange would help to inform the review of policies and procedures.

Implications for Practice

Several practical considerations were raised when the comments of the principals and the senior administrators in the study were considered in light of the literature. The

number of classroom visitations associated with the instructional supervision process was one of those considerations. Also apparent was the need for training for supervisors as well as a review of the reporting structure related to instructional supervision within the MRSB.

Classroom Visitations

The PPP had, as part of its procedure, only one supervisory visit to a classroom by an administrator every four years. In the study, the teachers all expressed their appreciation for the time that their principals spent in their classrooms. One teacher specifically stated that she would welcome and value full period observations from Helga and her "constructive criticism" on her teaching. Kate did an observation with each teacher every year, and her teachers felt the instructional supervision process was "very well done" in her school.

There is research to show that teacher skills is one of the major factors in student achievement (Florence, 2005; Marzano, 2003), and a significant body of research suggests instructional supervision programs can have an impact on teacher behaviours and skills (Dell'olio, 1998; Florence, 2005; Gleave, 1997; Greene, 1992; Hillyer, 2003; Hyun & Marshall, 1996; McBride & Skau, 1995; Munson, 1998; Varley, 2005; Wallace, 1998; Zepeda, 2002; Zepeda & Ponticell, 1998). One interpretation of these studies might be that teachers and students benefit from principals observing in classrooms. In GMES, where instructional supervision was not viewed as an add-on and was integrated into the teachers' professional development plan, more than one visit every four years was occurring and this practice was well received by the teachers. The teachers at GMES documented changes in their instruction related to the supervision process. In CDHS, at

least one teacher wanted more formal visits and the others said that they appreciated their principal whenever she was in their classrooms. This evidence from the study seems to suggest that one formal visit every four years was not believed to be enough.

Training for Supervisors: "Actioning the System"

Kate and Dave pointed out that supervisory conversations can be difficult at times. Dave said that not every principal handles those situations well. Greg referred to the skills of principals to perform supervisory tasks. Susan said that if a principal had a good background in instructional strategies and teaching skills, then instructional supervision was usually performed well in those schools. Teachers commented that they had taught in other schools where the supervisory process was not as well done as it was in their present school and they expressed support for the process in their school.

It appears that there is a good case for ongoing training of administrators in the area of instructional leadership and supervisory skills. The study pointed out gaps in the supervisory process in MRSB. Dave said he did not believe that enough of the principals were conducting the process. Susan stated that she was not keeping up with the appraisals of the principals in her family of schools and that some of the principals were more on top of the instructional supervision process than were others.

One mechanism to deal with this issue would be supervisory training, as evidenced by the commitment to the training that the Superintendent and the principals attended on PLCs. When ongoing training is offered for a skill, it demonstrates the importance of the topic. If this Board, and others, were to provide annual supervisory workshops for administrators, especially new people, it would bring importance to the issue and help to overcome some of the challenges with instructional supervision related

to supervisory skills. Perhaps this training would contribute to what Dave called "actioning the system".

Reporting Structure

In the MRSB, the Human Resources Department monitored the process of instructional supervision and kept the records. Principals, however, reported to Area Supervisors, who worked in the Education Services Department, and reported to the Director of Education Services. I believe this reporting structure to be cumbersome. It would make sense that one department keep track of the process and be responsible in the reporting structure. If this change in structure were not possible, then some other solutions should to be explored.

Greg and Allan noted that the letters to the principals to remind them to complete the process came from the Coordinator of Human Resources who had no authority over the principals. It was up to the supervisors of principals from the Education Services side to take an interest and follow-up to see which of their principals were completing the appraisal process.

Another difficulty with the reporting structure was that all the support personnel for teachers who were having difficulties were from the Education Services Department and it was not guaranteed that someone from Education Services was notified when a teacher was having trouble. For example, if a teacher were having a challenge with a particular part of teaching reading, a language arts consultant from Education Services might be the best person to help the teacher. Nobody in the Education Services Department would have necessarily known about the issue because the problem would have been reported to Human Resources Department.

Allan told me specifically that neither he nor anyone from his department visited classrooms when a teacher was not doing well. It was not clear who would have ensured that the supports that were identified as necessary by the principal were available and offered to the teacher in a professional manner. I offer two ways to deal with this situation. a) HR could continue to monitor the process with information about who was or was not conducting the process sent to the supervisors in Education Services for them to remind the principals to complete the appraisal process. b) Someone in Education Services monitors the process and keeps the supervisors informed, and then sends the completed appraisals to HR for the teacher files.

Implications for Theory

This study has generated more questions than it has answered regarding vision. However, it does highlight the potential for a deeper theoretical examination of certain aspects of vision and their implications for leadership, learning, and organizational effectiveness. Six themes for theory development present themselves. These relate to the role of vision in organizational and leadership sustainability, the nature and dynamics of the process for the development of an organization's vision, the relationship between vision, policy, and practice, the nature of vision as meta-policy, and the relationship of supervision to student learning.

On the first theme, I offer the proposition that organizational sustainability can be enhanced by the visioning process. In their book on Sustainable Leadership, Hargreaves and Fink (2006) noted that people's energy and long term effectiveness are depleted when they are disconnected from, and unable to pursue or fulfill, a morally compelling

purpose. What is the role of visioning in this regard? Can this be the basis upon which the visioning process might be seen as an exercise in sustainability?

To further develop this connection to sustainability, I note that one of the key principles developed by Hargreaves and Fink (2006) is “conservation” (p. 225). Hargreaves and Fink argued that conservation is respecting the past of an organization while building for the future. Vision may be a tool to facilitate conservation, assisting the organization to focus on what is important thereby creating a framework for deciding what should continue and what should be discontinued. If vision keeps organizations focused, then it can act as a screen to determine not only what an organization does, but what it doesn’t do. Rather than jumping from initiative to unconnected initiative, an organization with a clear vision can use that vision as a filter to respect the work that is being done (and has been done) and to ensure that any initiative that is undertaken relates to the core purpose of the organization.

Before leaving the theme of sustainability, some of the forces that restrict sustainability should be examined. For example, such practices as rapid and unwarranted change, the use of inappropriate expertise, ignoring professional knowledge, and excessive efforts at prescription can hamper flexibility and sustainability. In contrast to such practices, Hargreaves and Fink suggested supportive strategies that rebuild confidence, competence, and pride among educators. These strategies reinforce the concept of conservation and seem to hold significant possibilities for new theory and direction in vision development.

A second theme concerns the process for the development of vision. The literature seems to be of limited value as a guide to vision development practices.

Discussions of the concept of vision are very general with a good deal of advocacy, some research, and very limited theory building. Authors have varying opinions on the process of visioning. Writers such as Barker (1991) and Belasco and Stayer (1993) indicated that vision could grow from anywhere in the organization as long as it is clear and compelling, while other writers such as Leiberman (1995) and Fullan (1997) advocated a grassroots approach to developing vision. In this study, the implication emerged that the vision should be developed collaboratively, but there is no clear evidence that a collaboratively developed vision will maintain its relevance over time. There is a need for theory building in this area.

The methodology in this study was a bottom-up exercise. It looked at what happened in classrooms and proceeded up the hierarchy. This methodology has implications for the process by which vision and supervisory practices are conceptualized. Perhaps professional practices in classrooms and offices are a more logical starting point for the visioning process than the more traditional top-down boardroom scenario. How can theory help systems to anticipate emergent ways of doing things that are not represented in extant vision and policies?

A third theme concerns the relationship among clarity, prescription, and flexibility of vision. How might theory help to deal with questions concerning the need for a vision that is clear, but is neither too prescriptive nor too flexible? Barker's work (Personal Communication, March, 2001) concerning the creativity on the fringes of an organization (and how that activity can enhance productivity and effectiveness, if fostered in a visionary organization,) seems relevant to this issue. Such creativity can contribute to organizational health and longevity.

In this study, several of the interviewees mentioned the “wordiness” of the vision, and the lack of clarity with which they understood it seemed to reinforce the need for an understandable vision. Vision needs to be clear, but not so restrictive that it eliminates creativity from the activity of an organization or group. How might some of the thinking around organizational creativity provide perspective on these issues?

Turning once more to the relationship of vision to policy and practice, in what ways does vision inform policy? One of the findings from the study was that multiple interpretations of the vision seem to generate multiple understandings of policy. Can there be a clearer theoretical link between vision and policy? Perhaps future conceptualizations might shed light on these questions. Not a lot has been written about the relationship of vision to practice. This study has attempted to draw the link between vision and supervisory practice but it has been challenging to articulate the relationship clearly because of the lack of clarity with which people perceived the vision.

A fifth theme with implications for theory involves one of the major assumptions of this study, which was that vision constitutes meta-policy. Perhaps, in retrospect, this was a tenuous assumption. There would need to be considerably more theoretical examination to clarify this relationship. In the study, there seemed to be a clear link between administrative procedures (developed to implement policy) and practice.

The link between policy, administrative procedures, and practice is a useful finding and should not be ignored. An authentic relationship between policy and practice might be seen as an exercise in enhancing the sustainability of the district, and may be a useful theoretical construct.

Finally, the relationship between instructional supervision and learning is critical. Some recent studies have tied the process of supervision to learning outcomes. This relationship has long been considered a tenuous one and at least one writer on professional learning communities has expressed concern that the supervision process may have little to do with student learning (DuFour, 1997). Earlier in this chapter, I proposed and discussed a heuristic to integrate the vision and the instructional supervision process in school districts. This heuristic diagrammatically represents the possible connections among vision, supervision, and learning outcomes.

Through the study I learned that Bernard believed that the instructional supervision process conducted by Kate at GMES improved his teaching ability and the learning of his students. Kate asked teachers to collect data in their classrooms to document how student learning or behaviour had changed due to working toward the attainment of the teachers' goals. Bernard's goal was related to student assessment and he said his focus was to use a variety of assessment methods in literacy and to monitor his students' progress, determine the weaknesses and strengths of the students, and prescribe a course of action when remediation was necessary. From my interpretation of my discussions with Bernard, there seemed to a link in his case between instructional supervision and student learning.

In the supervisory interaction I observed at GMES, the teacher presented some student related data to show that she was meeting her goal, but more data were requested. In the interaction observed at CDHS, the focus was on how the students were achieving and what structures could be built in to facilitate that process. All of the teachers spoke of enhanced skills they had developed through the goal setting process as part of the PPP.

Marzano's (2003) work presented compelling evidence that building the skills of teachers could directly improve student learning outcomes. His meta-study found that teacher skills have the strongest relationship of any factor to student learning. The work of Varley (2005) and Florence (2005) supported this perspective because both found a link among instructional supervision, instructional leadership, and student learning. Continued development of theory will help to solidify and clarify the link between supervision and student learning.

Implications for Further Research

Teacher evaluation emerged in this study as a topic requiring further exploration. In addition, the size and scope of my study suggested some directions for other studies on similar topics that could complement this research. There were also several contextual factors that represent possibilities for further study.

Evaluation: Teacher Competence

This study addressed instructional supervision. An area for further research would be to follow up on Greg's concern that the PPP had not identified incompetent teachers. There had not been a termination of a teacher, based on incompetence identified through the PPP, which Greg could remember. He believed that the law of averages said that with over 1000 teachers in the system, someone would have had to be performing below performance expectations. Based on my findings in this study, the area of evaluation, and dismissing teachers for reasons of incompetence, would be an important topic for further research. I did not find a body of Canadian literature in the area of teacher dismissal due to incompetence.

Size of Study

This study was confined to two schools in one district. This size of study limited the scale of the study and the data that were collected. It might be useful to conduct a study in all of the schools in a district or at least with a larger sample. The MRSB had more than 80 schools and I only looked at two of them. The use of a wider lens to examine the vision/policy/practice dynamics in a larger sample of schools may be of interest.

The district was selected due to its reputation of having exemplary instructional supervision practices. It might be useful to conduct a study in all districts in a province. Probably, it is more likely that there would be a relationship between the vision and supervisory practices in a district that had a reputation for exemplary practices than there would be in other districts. This study was limited in its scope and could not answer that question, nor did it set out to answer this.

Contextual Factors

The study was conducted in one province in Eastern Canada. Contextual factors, such as the use of the term "performance appraisal" may have had an impact on the study. In other provinces, the term performance appraisal had an evaluative connotation (Brian Keegan, personal communication, August, 2006) and it was difficult to determine what effect the terminology had on the practice of instructional supervision when conducting the study. Research in other jurisdictions might be beneficial to address this issue.

The district that was studied was following a provincially suggested organizational structure. I have suggested that the organizational structure should be

examined in practice, but studies should be conducted in jurisdictions with different organizational structures to see if the structure has an influence on the articulation of the vision or its relationship to practice.

Concluding Comment

I am convinced, after conducting this study, of the important role that principals play in the functioning of a school, particularly in the area of instructional supervision. The schools in this study seemed to take on the character of the principal in relation to instructional leadership and supervision. Kate and Helga were both instructional leaders, but carried out that leadership in differing manners.

Kate provided the staff with considerable structure related to the supervision process. Helga had high expectations, but tended to operate on a more informal basis. I believe that both principals were keys to the positive climate of their schools.

I am also convinced of the importance of a clear vision in a school district. The study reinforced the value of a collaborative process to develop the vision, and ongoing dialogue and communication to maintain and review it. If there is any ambiguity or lack of clarity in the expressed vision, there will likely be varying interpretations of the direction of the district. The actions and policies of the Board and the interpretations of the vision and policies by senior administrators can all contribute to the implied vision of a school district. In this study, all people interviewed offered an interpretation of the vision of the Board, and they all felt they had some idea of the vision and what was expected in the district. They felt in harmony with the vision of the Board, but did not have direct knowledge of the expressed vision. They were articulating and following an

implied vision that they had gleaned from many interactions within the district and with the Board.

Finally, as recent literature seems to imply, instructional supervision can flourish in the midst of a professional learning community, a community of learners, or a community of practice. The supervisory practice in the schools was "morphing" into a learning community even though the supervision policy-in-action, the PPP, was not the catalyst for this change in philosophy. This changing orientation emphasizes the role of the leadership and the importance of renewal.

I have suggested a heuristic for the integration of meta-policy/vision, policy-in-intention, policy-in-action, policy-in-experience and "policy-alive". Policy-alive is meant to be interpreted as the results of the other levels of policy. Outcomes become the issue. In a school system, outcomes are in the form of teacher growth or professional development leading to improved student learning. Some recent investigations (Florence, 2005; Varley, 2005) seem to be building a strong connection between supervision and student learning. Supervision can change teacher behaviour, and Marzano's (2003) meta-analysis shows that the skill of a teacher is the most important factor in student achievement; thus, the link between supervision and learning is clear. When vision has an impact on policy-in-action, policy-in-experience, and policy-alive, then vision will relate directly to student learning, and student success will not be left to the capriciousness of multiple interpretations or implied vision.

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APPENDIX A

Ethics Proposal

University of Saskatchewan Advisory Committee on Ethics in Behavioural Sciences Research

Application for Approval of Research Protocol

January, 2005

1. Researcher's Summary:

Researcher: Norman Dray, B.A., B.Ed., P.G.D., M.Ed. (Doctoral Candidate)
Department of Educational Administration

Supervisor: Dr. Patrick Renihan
Department of Educational Administration

Department: Educational Administration, College of Education

Type of Study: Doctor of Philosophy, Educational Administration

Timeline: Start Date: February, 2006
Completion Date: July, 2006

2. Title of Study:
The Relationship of Vision and Instructional Supervision in a Selected School District.

3. Abstract:
The purpose of the research study is to examine the relationship between the vision and mission of a selected school district and the practices it undertakes in the area of instructional supervision. The researcher will study the mission, vision and supervisory practices of a school district that has been identified as having a reputation for employing exemplary instructional supervision practices. Interviews with selected key people, observations and document analysis will be used as data collection techniques.

In the study three forms of data collection will be used: interviews, observations and document analysis. Field notes will be taken to contribute to the total picture. Interviews will be held with the Superintendent, the Director of Education Services, the Coordinator of Human Resources, the Board Chair, at least two principals and at least two teachers in each school within the school district selected for the study. Audio recordings will be used to facilitate the process. It will be the part of the study to observe instructional supervision interactions. It is the intention of the researcher to review mission or vision statements, policies, minutes, agendas, memos, training documents, procedural handbooks and any other relevant documentation that is available. Supervision reports will be a source of data if the researcher can negotiate access.

To facilitate the purpose of the study, several research questions were addressed. They are as follows. What is the expressed vision of a selected school system, with a reputation

for effective supervisory practices? In that system, what are the formal policies on instructional supervision? How does the practice of instructional supervision relate to the formal policies that are in place? What do the teachers, school-based administrators and school system administrators see as the strengths and weaknesses of the supervision process in their system? What relationship is there between the expressed vision and the policies on teacher supervision? What is the nature of the relationship between the expressed vision and actual supervisory practices?

4. Funding:
The researcher is receiving no outside funding to complete this research.

5. Participants:
The participants in the study will be the Superintendent, the Director of Education Services, the Coordinator of Human Resources, the Board Chair, two principals, and two teachers at each school site in the Regional School Board in Eastern Canada. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with each of the above.

All participants will be approached after the Superintendent has given written permission for the study. Participants will be shown the permission letter of the Superintendent. Teachers will be shown the signed permission of the principals.

In addition to the interviews the researcher will get permission to observe in classrooms while instructional supervision is taking place and to observe pre-conferences and post-conferences associated with instructional supervision. The heart of the study is the interviews, and the observations of certain events will add depth to the description.

The researcher will have no relationship with the participants, but he may be known to them because he is superintendent in a neighbouring school district and is frequently in the media in that role. The researcher has been in Eastern Canada only since August, 2005, so there is less chance of a familiarity factor than there might have been. The researcher will inform participants that they have the right to withdraw from the study at any point without penalty and also ensure their right to confidentiality.

See Appendix A for the Letter to the Superintendent Seeking Permission for Research.

See Appendix B for the Follow-up Letter to the Superintendent.

See Appendix C for the Letter to the Director of Education Services/Coordinator of Human Resources

See Appendix D for the Letter to the Board Chair

See Appendix E for the Letter to the Principal of Participating Schools.

See Appendix F for the Letter to the Teachers.

6. Consent:

The Superintendent will be asked for her consent to be interviewed and for permission for the District to participate in the study. The consent forms are contained in the final sections of Appendix A, C, D, E and F. The Directors of Programs and Services and the Coordinator of Human Resources will be asked for their consent to be interviewed and to be observed if they are involved in instructional supervision activities. The Board Chair will be asked for consent to be interviewed. Principals will be asked for their consent to be interviewed, for consent to be observed participating in the instructional supervision process and for consent for their schools to be part of the study. Teachers will be asked for consent to be interviewed and for consent to be observed participating in the instructional supervision process.

A letter of consent will be provided to each participant at the beginning of the study. The participants will attest, using that form, that they have read and understood the description of the study provided, have been provided with the opportunity to ask questions, and have had their questions satisfactorily answered. The participants will indicate their willingness to participate in the study as described through a signature. The letter of consent will include the individual's opportunity to withdraw from the study without penalty at any time and also ensure the right to confidentiality. Participants will be provided with a copy of the signed consent form for their own records. Consent forms will be kept separate from participant information. The letters of consent are attached to this proposal. Also attached is the letter to obtain permission from the school district where the study is to be conducted.

7. Methods and Procedures:

Data will be collected using interviews, document analysis, and observation. All interviews, document analysis, and observations will be conducted by the researcher. Field notes will be taken by the researcher. Interviews will be conducted with the Superintendent, the Director of Education Services, the Coordinator of Human Resources, the Board Chair, at least two principals and at least two teachers at each school site. Audio recordings will be used to facilitate the process. It will be the part of the study to observe instructional supervision interactions. The researcher will review mission or vision statements, policies, minutes, agendas, memos, training documents, procedural handbooks and any other relevant documentation that is available. Supervision reports will be an excellent source of information if the researcher can negotiate access.

Procedures to maintain confidentiality in interviews and observations will be followed. The limits of confidentiality and anonymity will be addressed and all precautions on part of the researcher with be taken to ensure confidentiality and anonymity of the participants.

See Appendix G for the Interview Protocols.

Storage of Data:
Transcription will be done by a person hired by the researcher, who has agreed to provisions associated with confidentiality and anonymity. Transcripts will be stored on the hard drive of the Annapolis Valley Regional School Board computers. All hard copy data will be stored in the office of Dr, Patrick Renihan, Department of Educational Administration. It will be locked and stored according to University and Tri-council requirements. The School Board will receive a copy of the study.

8. Dissemination of Results:
The results of this study will be used as part of a doctoral dissertation of the researcher. A secondary intent is to use the data and findings in conference presentations and proceedings, journal articles, and other scholarly works at a later time. Executive summary will be provided to the participants. The school district will receive a complete copy of the study.

9. Risk or Deception:
The risk involved in the study is minimal and there is no deception involved. Participation of the school district involved is voluntary. The researcher will collect all the data. The interviews will be audio-taped and therefore will be performed in a closed environment to ensure confidentiality. Risks due to the limits in the ability to guarantee confidentiality will be addressed and all precautions on part of the researcher will be taken to ensure confidentiality and anonymity of the participants.

10. Confidentiality:
(a) *Interviews*: Participants will be assured that the results of their interview responses will be protected. Because of the single district studied, only the researcher will be aware of the district invited to participate. Data will be gathered and presented using both aggregate reporting and direct quotations. Any references to schools, other colleagues, or any other identifiable remarks will be carefully examined and changed as needed to ensure confidentiality. All participants will be given pseudonyms and will not be identifiable by school. All precautions will be taken to ensure confidentiality of the participants. All data from interviews will be labeled with pseudonyms and stored in separate sealed envelopes.

(b) *Document Analysis*: The documents and procedures that will be reviewed in this study are available publicly, and do not require the researcher to ensure confidentiality or anonymity, except as they reveal the name of the district that agreed to participate in the study. A pseudonym for the district will be used and all notes based on the documents will be stored in sealed envelopes using the pseudonym.

(c) *Observations*: Only the researcher will be aware of the school district studied, the schools studied and the names of the participants. Notes from observations will be kept in sealed enveloped using pseudonyms for the school board, the schools and the participants.

Data/Transcript Release:
Each participant will be provided with copies of the transcript of her/his interview. Participants will be given the opportunity to review, add to, delete from, and change the final transcript. Participants will receive a copy of the transcript with their own remarks highlighted and their pseudonym identified. Participants will have the opportunity to withdraw at any time all or any of their responses without penalty. The data will be destroyed after five years. Furthermore, each participant will be asked to sign a transcript release form. This form indicates that they agree with what they said in the transcript or what they intended to say. To ensure confidentiality, transcript release forms and transcripts will be stored separately.

The Superintendent will be asked to review the compilation and presentation of the data from the document analysis and the observations. She will have the opportunity to review, add to, delete from, and change the final compilation and presentation of the data. Principals will have the opportunity to review the data compilation and presentation of the data from their school. They will have the opportunity to review, add to, delete from, and change the final compilation and presentation of the data from their school.

See Appendix H for Interview Transcript Release Form.

11. Debriefing and Feedback:
Participants will be informed of the steps in the study as the study progresses and will be encouraged to ask questions of the researcher. Questions and comments will be invited at any time and participants will have the necessary information to contact the researcher, the Department of Educational Administration, and the Office of Research Services at the University of Saskatchewan. Following the completion of the study, the participants, upon request, will be provided with an executive summary of the study. They will also be made aware of the availability of the dissertation when it is complete. The Board will receive a copy of the study.

12. Required Signatures:

Researcher: _____

Supervisor: _____

Department Head: _____

13. Contact Information:

Norman Dray	Norman Dray
22 Kadray Court	342 Whitewood Road
Kentville, Nova Scotia	Saskatoon, Sk
B4N 5K2	S7J 4K8

.

902-678-5305 (home in Nova Scotia)
306-373-3430 (home in Saskatoon)
902-538-4606 (work)
902-538-4634 (fax)

APPENDIX A

Letter to the Superintendent
Seeking Permission for Research

Dear Superintendent,

I am a doctoral student at the Department of Educational Administration in the College of Education at the University of Saskatchewan. I am conducting a study entitled: *The Relationship of Vision and Instructional Supervision in a Selected School District.*

The purpose of the study is to examine the relationship of the vision of a school district to day-to-day instructional supervision practices. I would like to invite two schools that you nominate to participate in the study and to interview the principals and at least two teachers in those schools. I would like to work with schools that are prepared to allow me to observe interactions that are part of the instructional supervision process. I would also like to interview you, the Board Chair, the Director of Education Services and the Coordinator of Human Resources. In addition to this, I would like to have access to documents to review such as mission or vision statements, policies, minutes, agendas, memos, training documents, procedural handbooks and any other relevant documentation that is available.

You will be interviewed once (approximately 60 minutes) and the interview will be audio-taped and you will be free to turn off the audio-tape at any time during the process. You have the right not to answer all the questions if you so wish.

The audio-tape will be transcribed and analyzed to discover major themes that will be discussed. You will be asked to review the typed transcript of our discussion. You will be asked to check the transcription to clarify and add information, so as to construct the meanings and interpretations that become "data" for later interpretation by me as researcher. You may add, alter, or delete any information from the transcript as you see fit. I may also contact you within six months for points of clarification that will assist me in analysis.

The data from this study will be used in the completion of a doctoral dissertation. The data may also be published as presented at conferences. To safeguard your confidentiality and anonymity, you will be assigned a pseudonym, and all identifying information such as your district and the schools involved will be removed.

The audio recordings will be stored at the University of Saskatchewan as will your contact information. These data will be stored in the office of my supervisor, Dr. Patrick Renihan for five years, after which time, they will be destroyed. You may withdraw from the study for any reason, at any time, without penalty of any sort. If you withdraw from the study at any time, any data that you have contributed will be destroyed.

It is my hope that you will allow those listed above to participate in the study. The district, the schools and the teachers are assured complete anonymity and confidentiality. The study has been approved on ethical grounds and by the University of Saskatchewan Behavioural Sciences Research Ethics Board on [*insert date*].

I seek your permission to conduct the study. I also seek your cooperation to nominate two schools with effective instructional supervision practices. Once you have nominated the schools, I seek your permission to contact the schools and arrange the interviews and observations. The schools and your district can benefit from the study through an examination of instructional supervision practices. Your district was nominated because it has a reputation for excellent supervisory practices so the district may benefit from examining the relationship of the vision of the district to those practices.

I am looking forward to your response to this request. If you are willing to have your district participate, please complete the attached form and return it to me. You may fax your response to: 902-538-4634.

Thank you for your assistance with the study. If you are interested, I will forward you a copy of my completed dissertation.

If you have any questions concerning the study, please feel free to contact me 902-538-4606 (work) or 902-678-5305 (home), or by email at norm.dray@avrsb.ednet.ns.ca. You may also contact my advisor, Dr. Patrick Renihan, at 306-966-7619, professor at the Department of Educational Administration, University of Saskatchewan, and the University of Saskatchewan Office of Research Services at 306-966-2084.

Thank you for giving this request your attention.

Yours in Working for Students,

Norman Dray
Department of Educational Administration
University of Saskatchewan

I am willing to allow [insert name] Regional School Board to participate in the study entitled: *The Relationship of Vision and Instructional Supervision in a Selected School District.* This research will be undertaken by Norman Dray in the Department of Educational Administration at the University of Saskatchewan as partial requirement for a Doctor of Philosophy Degree.

I have read and understood the description provided above. I have been provided with an opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered satisfactorily. I consent to participate in the study described above, and I understand that I may withdraw this consent at any time. A copy of this consent form has been given to me for records.

_____

Superintendent of [*insert name*] Regional School Board.

Date: _____

APPENDIX B

Follow-up to Letter to the Superintendent

Dear Superintendent,

Thank you for your response to my letter and agreeing to have your district participate in my study titled *The Relationship of Vision and Instructional Supervision in a Selected School District.*

I will contact you by telephone to confirm the schools that you are nominating to participate in my research. After receiving your permission, I will be contacting the schools. I will also be contacting you, the Board Chair, the Director of Education Services and the Coordinator of Human Resources to arrange interviews. I will be seeking access to documents to review such as mission or vision statements, policies, minutes, agendas, memos, training documents, procedural handbooks and any other relevant documentation that is available.

Thank you once again for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Norman Dray
Department of Educational Administration
University of Saskatchewan

APPENDIX C

Letter to Director of Education Services/Director of Human Resources

Dear Director of Education Services/Coordinator of Human Resources,

I am a doctoral student at the Department of Educational Administration in the College of Education at the University of Saskatchewan. I am conducting a study entitled: *The Relationship of Vision and Instructional Supervision in a Selected School District.* The purpose of the study is to examine the relationship of the vision of a school district to day-to-day instructional supervision practices.

I seek your permission to interview you and to observe instructional supervision activities in which you may be involved. The district and all those involved are assured complete anonymity and confidentiality. The study has been approved on ethical grounds and by the University of Saskatchewan Behavioural Sciences Research Ethics Board on [*insert date*].

You will be interviewed once (approximately 60 minutes) and the interview will be audio-taped and you will be free to turn off the audio-tape at any time during the process. You have the right not to answer all the questions if you so wish.

The audio-tape will be transcribed and analyzed to discover major themes that were discussed. You will be asked to review the typed transcript of our discussion. You will be asked to check the transcription to clarify and add information, so as to construct the meanings and interpretations that become "data" for later interpretation by me as researcher. You may add, alter, or delete any information from the transcript as you see fit. I may also contact you within six months for points of clarification that will assist me in analysis.

The data from this study will be used in the completion of a doctoral dissertation. The data may also be published as presented at conferences. To safeguard your confidentiality and anonymity, you will be assigned a pseudonym, and all identifying information such as your district and the schools involved will be removed.

The audio recordings will be stored at the University of Saskatchewan as will your contact information. These data will be stored in the office of my supervisor, Dr. Patrick Renihan for five years, after which time, they will be destroyed. You may withdraw from the study for any reason, at any time, without penalty of any sort. If you withdraw from the study at any time, any data that you have contributed will be destroyed.

The schools and your district can benefit from the study through an examination of instructional supervision practices. Your district was nominated because it has a

reputation for excellent supervisory practices so the district may benefit from examining the relationship of the vision of the district to those practices.
I am looking forward to your response to this request. If you are willing to participate, please complete the attached form and return it to me. You may fax your response to: 902-538-4634.

Thank you for your assistance with the study. If you are interested, I will forward you a copy of the results of the completed study.

If you have any questions concerning the study, please feel free to contact me 902-538-4606 (work) or 902-678-5305 (home), or by email at norm.dray@avrsb.ednet.ns.ca. You may also contact my advisor, Dr. Patrick Renihan, at 306-966-7619, professor at the Department of Educational Administration, University of Saskatchewan, and the University of Saskatchewan Office of Research Services at 306-966-2084.

Thank you for giving this request your attention.

Yours in Working for Students,

Norman Dray
Department of Educational Administration
University of Saskatchewan

I am willing to participate in the study entitled: *The Relationship of Vision and Instructional Supervision in a Selected School District.* This research will be undertaken by Norman Dray in the Department of Educational Administration at the University of Saskatchewan as partial requirement for a Doctor of Philosophy Degree.

I have read and understood the description provided above. I have been provided with an opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered satisfactorily. I consent to participate in the study described above, and I understand that I may withdraw this consent at any time. A copy of this consent form has been given to me for records.

_____
Director of Education Services/Human Resources [*insert name*] Regional School Board.

Date: _____

APPENDIX D

Letter to Board Chair

Dear Board Chair,

I am a doctoral student at the Department of Educational Administration in the College of Education at the University of Saskatchewan. I am conducting a study entitled: *The Relationship of Vision and Instructional Supervision in a Selected School District.* The purpose of the study is to examine the relationship of the vision of a school district to day-to-day instructional supervision practices.

I seek your permission to interview you as board chair. The district and all those involved are assured complete anonymity and confidentiality. The study has been approved on ethical grounds and by the University of Saskatchewan Behavioural Sciences Research Ethics Board on [*insert date*].

You will be interviewed once (approximately 60 minutes) and the interview will be audio-taped and you will be free to turn off the audio-tape at any time during the process. You have the right not to answer all the questions if you so wish.

The audio-tape will be transcribed and analyzed to discover major themes that were discussed. You will be asked to review the typed transcript of our discussion. You will be asked to check the transcription to clarify and add information, so as to construct the meanings and interpretations that become "data" for later interpretation by me as researcher. You may add, alter, or delete any information from the transcript as you see fit. I may also contact you within six months for points of clarification that will assist me in analysis.

The data from this study will be used in the completion of a doctoral dissertation. The data may also be published as presented at conferences. To safeguard your confidentiality and anonymity, you will be assigned a pseudonym, and all identifying information such as your district and the schools involved will be removed.

The audio recordings will be stored at the University of Saskatchewan as will your contact information. These data will be stored in the office of my supervisor, Dr. Patrick Renihan for five years, after which time, they will be destroyed. You may withdraw from the study for any reason, at any time, without penalty of any sort. If you withdraw from the study at any time, any data that you have contributed will be destroyed.

The schools and your district can benefit from the study through an examination of instructional supervision practices. Your district was nominated because it has a reputation for excellent supervisory practices so the district may benefit from examining the relationship of the vision of the district to those practices.

I am looking forward to your response to this request. If you are willing to participate, please complete the attached form and return it to me. You may fax your response to: 902-538-4634.

Thank you for your assistance with the study. If you are interested, I will forward you a copy of the results of the completed study.

If you have any questions concerning the study, please feel free to contact me 902-538-4606 (work) or 902-678-5305 (home), or by email at norm.dray@avrsb.ednet.ns.ca. You may also contact my advisor, Dr. Patrick Renihan, at 306-966-7619, professor at the Department of Educational Administration, University of Saskatchewan, and the University of Saskatchewan Office of Research Services at 306-966-2084.

Thank you for giving this request your attention.

Yours in Working for Students,

Norman Dray
Department of Educational Administration
University of Saskatchewan

I am willing to participate in the study entitled: *The Relationship of Vision and Instructional Supervision in a Selected School District.* This research will be undertaken by Norman Dray in the Department of Educational Administration at the University of Saskatchewan as partial requirement for a Doctor of Philosophy Degree.

I have read and understood the description provided above. I have been provided with an opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered satisfactorily. I consent to participate in the study described above, and I understand that I may withdraw this consent at any time. A copy of this consent form has been given to me for records.

_____
Board Chair [*insert name*] Regional School Board.

Date: _____

APPENDIX E

Letter to Principals of Participating Schools

Dear Principal,

I am a doctoral student at the Department of Educational Administration in the College of Education at the University of Saskatchewan. I am conducting a study entitled: *The Relationship of Vision and Instructional Supervision in a Selected School District.* The purpose of the study is to examine the relationship of the vision of a school district to day-to-day instructional supervision practices.

Your Superintendent has been notified of the study and has nominated your school to participate. I would like to interview you and at least two teachers at your school. I would like to observe interactions that are part of the instructional supervision process. In addition to this, I would like to have access to any documentation regarding instructional supervision that is available for me to review.

You will be interviewed once (approximately 60 minutes) and the interview will be audio-taped and you will be free to turn off the audio-tape at any time during the process. You have the right not to answer all the questions if you so wish.

The audio-tape will be transcribed and analyzed to discover major themes that were discussed. You will be asked to review the typed transcript of our discussion. You will be asked to check the transcription to clarify and add information, so as to construct the meanings and interpretations that become "data" for later interpretation by me as researcher. You may add, alter, or delete any information from the transcript as you see fit. I may also contact you within six months for points of clarification that will assist me in analysis.

The data from this study will be used in the completion of a doctoral dissertation. The data may also be published as presented at conferences. To safeguard your confidentiality and anonymity, you will be assigned a pseudonym, and all identifying information such as your district and the schools involved will be removed.

The audio recordings will be stored at the University of Saskatchewan as will your contact information. These data will be stored in the office of my supervisor, Dr. Patrick Renihan for five years, after which time, they will be destroyed. You may withdraw from the study for any reason, at any time, without penalty of any sort. If you withdraw from the study at any time, any data that you have contributed will be destroyed.

It is my hope that you will allow your school to participate in the study. The district, the schools and the teachers are assured complete anonymity and confidentiality. The study has been approved on ethical grounds and by the University of Saskatchewan Behavioural Sciences Research Ethics Board on [*insert date*].

I seek your permission to do research in your school. I also seek your cooperation to help to select at least two teachers to participate in the study. Your district and your school were nominated because they a reputation for excellent supervisory practices so the school may benefit from examining those practices.

I am looking forward to your response to this request. If you are willing to have your school participate, please complete the attached form and return it to me. You may fax your response to: 902-538-4634.

Thank you for your assistance with the study. If you are interested, I will forward you a copy of the results of the completed study.

If you have any questions concerning the study, please feel free to contact me 902-538-4606 (work) or 902-678-5305 (home), or by email at norm.dray@avrsb.ednet.ns.ca. You may also contact my advisor, Dr. Patrick Renihan, at 306-966-7619, professor at the Department of Educational Administration, University of Saskatchewan, and the University of Saskatchewan Office of Research Services at 306-966-2084.

Thank you for giving this request your attention.

Yours in Working for Students,

Norman Dray
Department of Educational Administration
University of Saskatchewan

I am willing to allow [insert name] School to participate in the study entitled: *The Relationship of Vision and Instructional Supervision in a Selected School District.* This research will be undertaken by Norman Dray in the Department of Educational Administration at the University of Saskatchewan as partial requirement for a Doctor of Philosophy Degree.

I have read and understood the description provided above. I have been provided with an opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered satisfactorily. I consent to participate in the study described above, and I understand that I may withdraw this consent at any time. A copy of this consent form has been given to me for records.

_____
Principal of [*insert name*] School

Date: _____

APPENDIX F

Letter to Teachers

Dear Teacher,

I am a doctoral student at the Department of Educational Administration in the College of Education at the University of Saskatchewan. I am conducting a study entitled: *The Relationship of Vision and Instructional Supervision in a Selected School District.* The purpose of the study is to examine the relationship of the vision of a school district to day-to-day instructional supervision practices.

Your school was nominated by your superintendent and you have been nominated by your principal to participate. The district, the schools and the teachers are assured complete anonymity and confidentiality. The study has been approved on ethical grounds and by the University of Saskatchewan Behavioural Sciences Research Ethics Board on [*insert date*].

I seek your permission to interview you and to observe instructional supervision activities in which you are involved. Your district and your school were nominated because they a reputation for excellent supervisory practices so the school may benefit from examining those practices.

You will be interviewed once (approximately 60 minutes) and the interview will be audio-taped and you will be free to turn off the audio-tape at any time during the process. You have the right not to answer all the questions if you so wish.

The audio-tape will be transcribed and analyzed to discover major themes that were discussed. You will be asked to review the typed transcript of our discussion. You will be asked to check the transcription to clarify and add information, so as to construct the meanings and interpretations that become "data" for later interpretation by me as researcher. You may add, alter, or delete any information from the transcript as you see fit. I may also contact you within six months for points of clarification that will assist me in analysis.

The data from this study will be used in the completion of a doctoral dissertation. The data may also be published as presented at conferences. To safeguard your confidentiality and anonymity, you will be assigned a pseudonym, and all identifying information such as your district and the schools involved will be removed.

The audio recordings will be stored at the University of Saskatchewan as will your contact information. These data will be stored in the office of my supervisor, Dr. Patrick Renihan for five years, after which time, they will be destroyed. You may withdraw from the study for any reason, at any time, without penalty of any sort. If you withdraw from the study at any time, any data that you have contributed will be destroyed.

I am looking forward to your response to this request. If you are willing to participate, please complete the attached form and return it to me. You may fax your response to: 902-538-4634.

Thank you for your assistance with the study. If you are interested, I will forward you a copy of the results of the completed study.

If you have any questions concerning the study, please feel free to contact me 902-538-4606 (work) or 902-678-5305 (home), or by email at norm.dray@avrsb.ednet.ns.ca. You may also contact my advisor, Dr. Patrick Renihan, at 306-966-7619, professor at the Department of Educational Administration, University of Saskatchewan, and the University of Saskatchewan Office of Research Services at 306-966-2084.

Thank you for giving this request your attention.

Yours in Working for Students,

Norman Dray
Department of Educational Administration
University of Saskatchewan

I am willing to participate in the study entitled: *The Relationship of Vision and Instructional Supervision in a Selected School District.* This research will be undertaken by Norman Dray in the Department of Educational Administration at the University of Saskatchewan as partial requirement for a Doctor of Philosophy Degree.

I have read and understood the description provided above. I have been provided with an opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered satisfactorily. I consent to participate in the study described above, and I understand that I may withdraw this consent at any time. A copy of this consent form has been given to me for records.

_____
Teacher, [insert name] School

Date: _____

APPENDIX G

Interview Protocols

Superintendent:

1. What is the vision of your school district?
2. How the vision developed?
3. How do you develop policy in your school district?
4. What is your policy on instructional supervision? How was it developed?
5. Tell me about the instructional supervision processes in your school district.
6. What influences your ability to implement your policy?
7. What do you see as the strengths and weaknesses of the instructional supervision process in your district?

Director of Education Services/Coordinator of Human Resources

1. What is the vision of your school district?
2. What is your policy on instructional supervision? How was it developed?
3. What is your role in instructional supervision?
4. Tell me about the instructional supervision processes in your school district.
5. What influences your ability to implement your policy?
6. What do you see as the strengths and weaknesses of the instructional supervision process in your district?

Board Chair

1. What is the vision of your school district?
2. How did you develop the vision?
3. How do you develop policy in your school district?
4. Tell me about the instructional supervision processes in your school district.

Principal

1. What is your understanding of the vision of your school district?
2. What is your district policy on instructional supervision?
3. What is your role in instructional supervision?
4. Tell me about instructional supervision in your school.
5. What influences your ability to implement the policy?
6. How do you feel about instructional supervision?
7. What do you see as the strengths and weaknesses of the instructional supervision process in your district?

Teacher

1. What is your understanding of the vision of your school district?

2. What is your understanding of the policy on instructional supervision in your school district?
3. Tell me about instructional supervision in your school.
4. How do you feel about instructional supervision? (How do you think other teachers feel?)
5. Who is involved in instructional supervision in your school?
6. How do you feel about instructional supervision?
7. What do you see as the strengths and weaknesses of the instructional supervision process in your district?

APPENDIX H

Interview Transcript Release Form

I,_____, have reviewed the complete transcript of my personal interview in this study, and have been provided with the opportunity to add, alter, and delete information from the transcript as appropriate. I acknowledge that the transcript accurately reflects what I said in my interview with Norman Dray. I hereby authorize the release of this transcript to Norman Dray to be used in the manner described in the consent form. I have received a copy of this Transcript Release Form for my records.

_____ _____

Participant Date

_____ _____

Researcher Date

APPENDIX B

Documents Analyzed

Documents Analyzed

District Level Documents

1. Mission Statement
2. Guiding Principles
3. Goals
4. Administrative Structure
5. Board Policy Manual
6. Board Policy on Board Policy and Administrative Procedures Development
7. Personnel Performance Program, Instructional/Teacher
8. Personnel Performance Program Workshop: Data Collection and Strategies
9. Personnel Performance Program Workshop: Participants' Questions/Answers
10. School Year Calendar

School Level Documents

A) **High School**

1. School Map
2. Bell Schedule: Junior and Senior High
3. Timetable (Senior High)
4. Home and School Pamphlet
5. Code of Conduct
6. Course Selection Form
7. Student Handbook
8. List of Extra-curricular Activities and Eligibility Requirements
9. Principal's Monthly Report to Area Supervisor

10. School Newsletters

B) **Elementary School**

1. Staff Binder Table of Contents

2. “Walk-through” Guide

3. Literacy Lesson Components

4. School Newsletters

5. Performance Appraisal Report (Volunteered by Teacher)

6. Performance Appraisal Goals and Documentation (Volunteered by Teacher)

APPENDIX C

Personnel Performance Program

PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

Instructional/Teacher

Contents

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Job Descriptions	21
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Researcher's Note: Grammar and other errors have been left in the document to reflect its original form.

Acknowledgement

We gratefully acknowledge the contribution of the following individuals for their many long hours of dedication to the Personnel Performance Program Project for teachers.
November 27, 2001

~ Coordinator of Human Resources
~ Principal, Elementary Schools
~ Principal, District School
~ Principal, Educational Centre
~ Teacher/NSTU Representative, Middle School
~ Principal, Elementary School
~ Vice-Principal, Jr./Sr. High Schools
~ Principal, Middle/High Schools
~ Teacher, Elementary School
~ Ex-Officio, Superintendent

1.

What Administrators Have Said About PPP

- “Promotes and encourages new teachers”
- “Positive approach allows room for growth”
- “Liked process – gave a focus on what you were looking for. It was not haphazard.”
- “Liked it because when they came to the conference they were able to judge from goals whether that was their focus.”
- “Encourages teachers to think where they want to be in four years.”
- “Liked how it was laid out – criteria specific”
- “Caused teachers to make changes for improvement.”

2.

What Teachers Have Said About PPP

- “Supervision before was stressful. PPP covers everything you do in the run of a year and is not intimidating.”
- “PPP allows you to self reflect.”
- “Clear progression in the rubrics.”
- “Never had an evaluation experience so thorough. Felt good about process.”
- “Positive feedback on the good things I was already doing.”
- “It’s important for Principals to have same information.”
- “I liked how specific it was.”
- “Knew what the expectations were and what the Principal was looking for.”
- “Apprehension at first – nervous, but became more and more comfortable with the Principal – very pleased.”
- “Process made me realize I had things I needed to improve upon.”
- “Good process, appreciated, very much, to know I was doing a good job.”

3.

PPP TIME-LINE

September	- Staff meeting to review process and job responsibilities - Start preliminary appraisal (Rubrics and Form PPP-O 1 — *25%* staff each year - Term and Probationary need preliminary form each year - Goal Setting (Form PPP-02, PPP-03 or PPP-04 as appropriate)
October	- Update goals for teachers in years 2,3 and 4 of PPP process
November	- Preliminary Appraisal Forms PPP-O1 to be forwarded to HR by **Nov. 15** - First evaluation of part-time term teachers — Form PPP-05 — **Nov. 30**
December	
January	- Ad hoc contact with teachers on PD track continues - Supervision of teachers in the formal and intensive tracks continues
February	
March	
April	- Annual or year-end reports (complete Forms PPP-02, PPP-03 or PPP-04) — to be submitted to HR by **April 30** - Second evaluation of part-time term teachers — Form PPP-O5 **April 30**
May	- Continued support/intervention for formal/intensive tracks
June	

4.

"The quality of a person's life is in direct proportion to their commitment to excellence, regardless of their particular job!"
(Vincent T Lombardi
NFL Coach)

- INTRODUCTION -

The Regional School Board — its members and staff — are committed to **excellence in education.**

Excellence is, in large part, dependent upon the "quality of work" evident in the day-to-day performance of those persons employed by the Board to provide leadership, instruction and/or support services within the regional education system.

Accordingly, it is appropriate that personnel performance effectiveness is regularly monitored and evaluated.

The Personnel Performance Program is designed to promote excellence in all aspects of personnel performance.

- PRINCIPLES –

- The purpose of the Personnel Performance Program is to enhance the quality of education for and service to children.

- The Personnel Performance Program will involve **all** employees on a regularly scheduled basis.

- The Personnel Performance Program is based upon the premise that most employees are competent professionals genuinely interested in growth and development.

- Within the Personnel Performance Program, all employees have a responsibility to meet established performance expectations.

- Within the Personnel Performance Program, continual growth and development of personnel effectiveness is a shared responsibility.

- The Personnel Performance Program will involve staff in a co-operative, constructive, continuous process that takes place within an atmosphere of fairness, trust and mutual respect.

- Within the Personnel Performance Program, **all** staff will work together to promote professional growth and development and to enhance employee effectiveness.

- Within the Personnel Performance Program, employees who are not meeting established performance expectations will be provided additional supervision, assistance and a reasonable time for improvement.

6.

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

Definition:

Performance Appraisal is the process by which the Regional School Board will evaluate the job-performance of employees in all employment categories.

Performance Appraisal provides opportunity for supervisors and employees to review:

- established performance expectations for employment positions~
- the level of performance expected;
- the criteria to be used in evaluation of performance; and,
- the results achieved by the employee.

Performance Appraisal is concerned with maintaining or improving employee job-performance and contributing to personal development and job-satisfaction through performance feedback.

Purpose:

The purpose of Performance Appraisal is to enhance the effectiveness with which employees perform their duties.

Objectives:

1. To ensure that employees know and are committed to achieving established performance expectations related to their employment position.
2. To provide employees with reasonable guidance regarding the quality of their performance in the interests of self-fulfillment and of responding to organizational requirements.
3. To assist employees in developing their abilities and skills (within the context of their jobs) through constructive feedback, coaching, training and other developmental activities.
4. To improve communications between employees and supervisors.
5. To improve supervisors' knowledge of employee capabilities and training needs.
6. To assist administrators in identifying and developing candidates for promotion, alternative job placement, training, etc.
7.

<u>Assumptions</u>:

1. Performance appraisal is an integral part of the administrative function of ensuring the effective utilization of human resources.

2. Performance appraisal is based upon the premise that all employees can improve and should be expected to do so.

3. An effective performance appraisal program contributes to the improvement of employee performance.

4. There is no single approach to performance appraisal, which can be applied universally to all groups of employees. Accordingly, appraisal procedures will be developed and implemented consistent with the work-related circumstances of each employment category.

5. The role of the Human Resources Department is to provide advice, guidance and co-ordination of the appraisal process(es) and the Personnel Performance Program.

6. Responsibility for performance appraisal lies with the employee's immediate supervisor.

7. Performance appraisal ensures that all efforts are pointed towards improvement of personnel performance.

8. Performance appraisal is an ongoing process, **not** an annual event.

9. Performance appraisal requires that both employees and supervisors have a clear understanding of performance expectations and standards.

10. Performance appraisal and discipline are separate and distinct processes.

11. a) The Preliminary, Developmental and Formal appraisal processes are used to improve the performance of employees.
    b) The Intensive Appraisal Process is used only with those employees whose job performance is below minimum acceptable standards.

12. Results of Preliminary, Development, Formal and/or Intensive appraisal cannot be used as a basis for discipline, however, failure to meet established performance expectations *I* standards can lead to non-disciplinary discharge.

8.

Performance Appraisal Processes

The Regional School Board Personnel Performance Program includes **four** performance appraisal processes:

1. Preliminary Appraisal Process... (For Teachers-See PPP Form—PPP-O1)

- used with **all** employees at the beginning of each appraisal cycle;
- used to determine the extent to which an employee's job-performance is consistent with established performance expectations; and,
- used to determine employee placement within either the Professional Development Appraisal Process or the Formal Appraisal Process but **not** the Intensive Appraisal Process.

2. Professional Development Appraisal Process...(For Teachers-See PPP Form — PPP-02)

- used with employees whose job performance is consistent with established performance expectations.

3. Formal Appraisal Process.. .(For Teachers-See PPP Form-PPP-03)

Used with:

- all 100% term teachers
- all probationary teachers
- have a permanent contract but request assignment to the Formal Appraisal Process (with approval of immediate supervisor)
- have a permanent contract but where job performance is not consistent with established performance expectations (as determined by the employee's immediate supervisor)
- have a permanent contract and meets established performance responsibilities, but can be assigned to either the Professional Development or Formal Appraisal Process upon the discretion of the administration.

4. Intensive Appraisal Process. . .(For Teachers-See PPP Form—PPP-04)

- used with an employee who is experiencing specific and significant difficulty in meeting established performance expectations; and/or,
- an employee whose overall job performance is considered below minimum acceptable standards.

♦ Part-Time Term Teacher Appraisal Process...(See PPP Form—PPP-05)

- Used with term teachers teaching less than 100%

9.

KEY TERMS . . . DEFINITIONS -

Established Performance Expectations
A description of what is expected (by the employer) to be evident and/or accomplished by an employee in terms of attitude, knowledge, skill, behavior, and/or results.

Minimum Acceptable Standards...
A level of employee job-performance (per established performance expectations) which approaches incompetence and below which the employer must consider job action.

Preliminary **Appraisal Process...**
The performance appraisal process used to determine the extent to which an employee's job-performance is consistent with established performance expectations. An "entry level" process conducted with each employee prior to formal placement within the Personnel Performance Program.

Professional Development Appraisal Process
The performance appraisal process is used to promote and enhance the job-performance of those employees who are successfully meeting established performance expectations.

Formal Appraisal Process
The performance appraisal process used to improve the job-performance of that employee whose job performance, while minimally acceptable, is not consistent with established performance expectations. It is also used with term teachers, first year administrators; permanent contract teachers who wish to go the formal process route and any teacher who does not have a permanent contract with the board.

Distinguished...
job-performance which consistently exceeds established performance responsibilities for the assigned position (assignment to Professional Development Appraisal Process)

Proficient...
job-performance which consistently meets or exceeds established performance responsibilities for the assigned position (assignment to Professional Development or Formal Appraisal Process upon request of the teacher)

Basic...
job-performance which meets established performance responsibilities for the assigned position (assignment to Professional Development or Formal Appraisal Process upon the discretion of the administrator)

Unsatisfactory...
job-performance which is consistently below established performance responsibilities for the assigned position (assignment to Formal Appraisal Process)

or
job-performance which portrays a specific and significant difficulty in meeting established performance responsibilities and/or is below minimum acceptable standards for the assigned position

Intensive Appraisal Process...
The performance appraisal process used to evaluate the job-performance of an employee whose job performance is below minimum acceptable standards, and/or who is experiencing a specific and significant difficulty in meeting established performance expectations. The results of intensive appraisal could lead to non-disciplinary job action by the employer.

Formative / Collegial
The process to be used with employees placed in the Professional Development Appraisal Process wherein the goals, strategies and time-line for performance enhancement are established by mutual agreement (collegial) between the supervisor and the employee and wherein the focus is on improvement (formative) of already superior or satisfactory performance.

Formative / Directive...
The process to be used with employees placed in the Formal Appraisal Process wherein the supervisor will determine (directive) the goals, strategies and time-frame and wherein the focus is on improvement of job-performance which is unsatisfactory.

Summative...
The process to be-used with employees placed within the Intensive Appraisal Process wherein the Supervisor determines the plan of action, strategies and time-frame for correcting the difficulty and/or bringing the employee's job-performance up to a satisfactory level.

11.

Performance Goals

Job-performance targets (attitude, behavior, knowledge, skills) established as part of the plan for performance enhancement, improvement, or correction.

Strategies...

The actions / activities determined as appropriate to enhance, improve and/or correct employee job-performance.

Time-line...

The period of time determined to be necessary and appropriate for the employee to achieve the goal(s) established as part of the performance appraisal process.

"Specific and significant difficulty"

An identifiable weakness in employee job-performance (attitude, behavior, knowledge, skill) which results in an employee's job-performance being deemed below minimum acceptable standards.

Performance Appraisal Cycle...

The period of time (four years) within which all employee will be participants in the Performance Appraisal Process and after which the process will be repeated with each employee.

Non-Disciplinary Discharge...

Discharge as a result of incompetence or non-performance of job tasks as assigned.

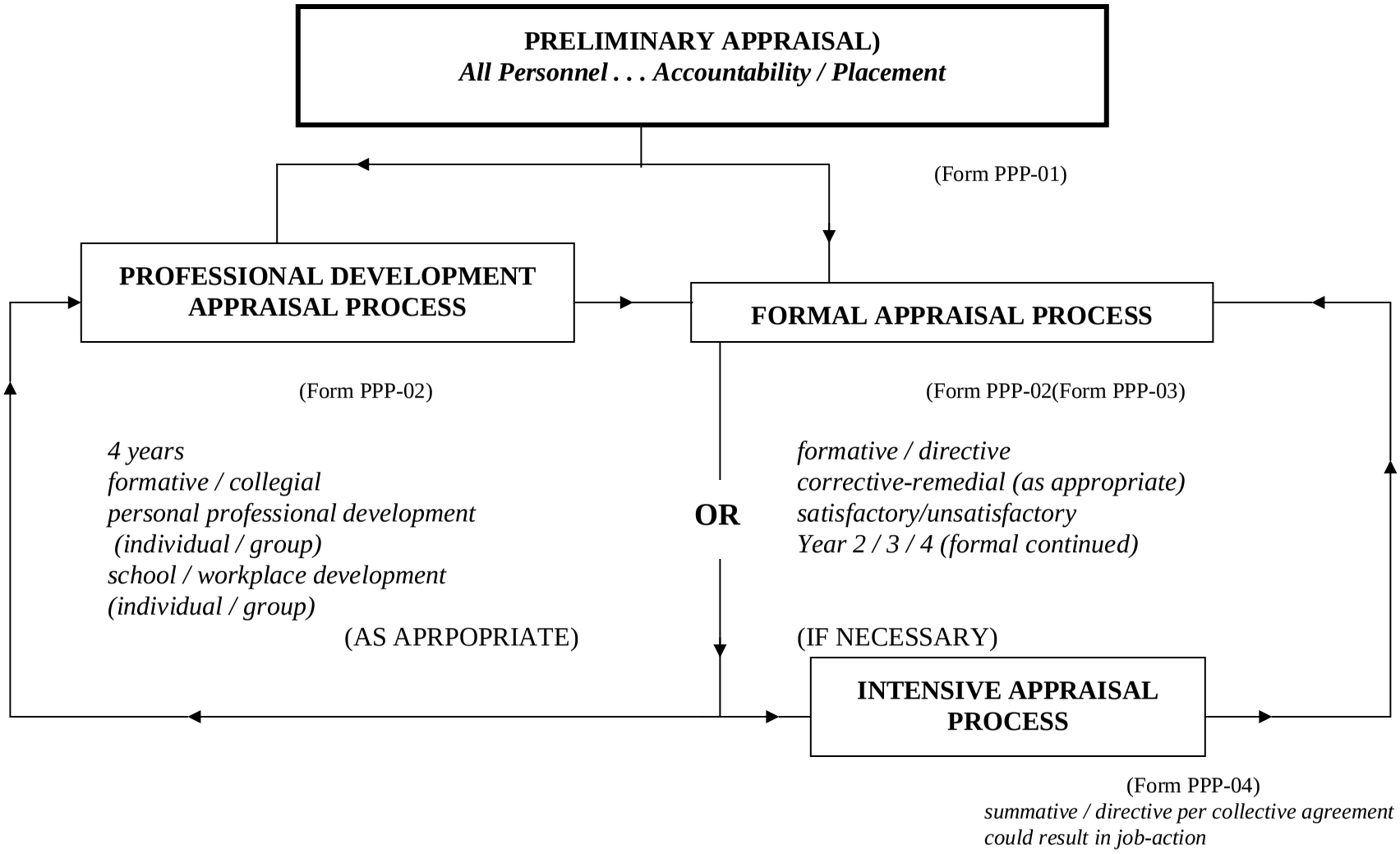
Disciplinary Discharge...

Discharge as a result of inappropriate/unacceptable behavior or conduct (per legal, moral, contractual standards)

12.

13.

PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE PROGRAM - "PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROCESS"



- KEY TERMS…DEFINITIONS

PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS . . .

A description of what is expected (by the employer) to be evident and/or accomplished by an employee in terms of attitude, knowledge, skill, behaviour, and/or results.

MINIMUM ACCEPTABLE STANDARDS . . .

A level of employee job-performance (per established performance expectations) which approaches incompetence and below which the employer must consider job action.

PRELIMINARY APPRAISAL PROCESS . . .

The performance appraisal process used to determine the extent to which an employee's job-performance is consistent with established performance expectations. An "entry level" process conducted with each employee prior to formal placement within the *PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE PROGRAM.*

DEVELOPMENT APPRAISAL PROCESS . . .

The performance appraisal process which is used to promote and enhance the job-performance of those employees who are successfully meeting established performance expectations. A professional development program.

FORMAL APPRAISAL PROCESS . . .

Part of the appraisal cycle for an employee whose job-performance is satisfactory, but may be using the formal appraisal process with mutual consent (employee and supervisor). Also, the formal appraisal process is used to improve the job-performance of those employees whose job-performance may not be consistent with all established performance expectations; or with first-year administrators or other employees who do not have a permanent contract with the employer.

INTENSIVE APPRAISAL PROCESS . . .

The performance appraisal process used to evaluate the job-performance of an employee whose overall job performance is unsatisfactory, and/or who is experiencing a specific and significant difficulty in meeting established performance expectations. The results of intensive appraisal could lead to non-disciplinary job action by the employer.

FORMATIVE / COLLEGIAL . . .

The process to be used with employees placed in the *DEVELOPMENT APPRAISAL PROCESS* wherein the goals, strategies and time-line for performance enhancement are established by mutual agreement (collegial) between the supervisor and the employee and wherein the focus is on improvement (formative) of already superior or satisfactory performance.

FORMATIVE / DIRECTIVE . . .

The process to be used with employees placed in the *FORMAL APPRAISAL PROCESS* wherein the supervisor will determine (directive) the goals, strategies and time-frame. The focus is on improvement of job-performance.

SUMMATIVE . . .

The process to be used with employees placed within the *INTENSIVE APPRAISAL PROCESS* wherein the Supervisor determines the plan of action, strategies and time-frame for correcting the difficulty and/or bringing the employee's job-performance up to a satisfactory level.

PERFORMANCE GOALS . . .

Job-performance targets (attitude, behaviour, knowledge, skills) established as part of the plan for performance enhancement, improvement, or correction.

STRATEGIES . . .

The actions / activities determined as appropriate to enhance, improve and/or correct employee job-performance.

TIME-LINE . . .

The period of time determined to be necessary and appropriate for the employee to achieve the goals(s) established as part of the performance appraisal process.

"SPECIFIC AND SIGNIFICANT DIFFICULTY" . . .

An identifiable weakness in employee job-performance (attitude, behaviour, knowledge, skill) which results in an employee's job-performance being deemed below minimum acceptable standards.

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL CYCLE . . .

The period of time (four years) within which all employee will be participants in the *PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROCESS* and after which the process will be repeated with each employee.

DEPT. OF EDUCATION – CIRRICULUM INITIATIVES
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- District Action Plans
- Administrative Leadership Program (L.E.A.P.)
- School Improvement Plans
- School Advisory Councils
- Topics for Exploration such as: Brain Research, Multiple Intelligence, Assessment/Portfolios, Inclusion, Constructive Block Schedule, Collaborative Learning, etc.
- Reflection on General Teaching Issues such as: Considering my Teaching and Assessment Practices, Assigning Instructional Priorities, Curriculum Development/Implementation, Priority Integrated Teaching and Learning Experiences, etc.
- Teacher Portfolios
- Formal Education (I.E.I.)
- Peer Coaching
- Mentoring
- Self-Evaluation
- Learning Development
- Substitute Training Programs
- Cooperative Learning
- Teaching Kids to be Peacemakers
- Talents
- Instructional Strategies
- Junior High Network Program

THIS LIST IS NOT ALL INCLUSIVE, OTHERS MAY BE DEVELOPED IN CONSULTATION WITH YOUR PRINCIPAL.

B. Instructional/Teacher

The Personnel Performance Program — **Instructional/Teacher** is intended to ensure:

- the job performance of those in **instructional/teacher** positions is consistent with established performance expectations
- instructional staff are committed to professional growth and development

The Personnel Performance Program — **Instructional/Teacher** shall include **four** separate and distinct appraisal processes:

1.Preliminary Appraisal Process

2.Professional Development Appraisal Process

3.Formal Appraisal Process

4.Intensive Appraisal Process

1. <u>Preliminary Appraisal Process</u> (Use Form PPP-O1)

At the beginning of each appraisal cycle, and prior to placement in the Professional Development Appraisal Process or the Formal Appraisal Process, **all** instructional employees will be involved in the Preliminary Appraisal Process.

The Preliminary Appraisal Process is intended to:

- determine the extent to which employees are meeting established performance expectations
- serve as the basis for assignment of an employee to either the Professional Development Appraisal Process or the Formal Appraisal Process
- identify areas of priority and/or concern for consideration and attention during participation in either the Professional Development Appraisal Process or Formal Appraisal Process

The Process...

1. The employee and his/her immediate supervisor will meet to:
   - review established performance expectations for the position
   - discuss (in general terms) the employee's performance per expectations
   - note any areas of concern or priority for attention
   - review the Professional Development Appraisal Process and, as appropriate, the Formal Appraisal Process

15.

2. The immediate supervisor will observe employee's job performance.

3. The immediate supervisor will complete the Preliminary Appraisal Form.

4. The immediate supervisor will determine the assignment of the employee to the Professional Development Appraisal Process or Formal Appraisal Process

5. The employee and the supervisor will meet to:
   - discuss the completed Preliminary Appraisal Form and performance observation(s)
   - discuss the supervisor's assignment of the employee to either the Professional Development Appraisal Process or the Formal Appraisal Process
   - complete (and sign) the Preliminary Appraisal Form (Due Nov. *15)*

6. The supervisor and the employee will begin either the Professional Development appraisal Process or Formal Appraisal Process

2. <u>Professional Development Appraisal Process</u> (Use Form PPP-02)

The Professional Development Appraisal Process encourages and promotes the ongoing professional development and performance enhancement of instructional employees:

- who have permanent contracts; and,
- whose job performance has been deemed consistent with established performance expectations.

The Professional Development Appraisal Process will:

- be formative / collegial in nature
- involve most staff on a regularly scheduled basis
- involve the employee and his/her immediate supervisor
- include a mutually developed (employee and immediate supervisor) plan for professional growth, including:
  - professional development / performance goals
  - indicators of progress toward identified goals
  - procedures / instruments to be used to monitor / assess progress
  - identification of strategies for achieving goals
  - a time-line for goal achievement
  - appropriate documentation prepared by both the employee and the supervisor related to the professional / performance growth plan
  - a summary report on employee progress

16.

- include a report to the Coordinator of Human Resources summarizing the process, and the progress of the employee involved

Assignment to the Professional Development Appraisal Process will be made by the employee's immediate supervisor.

3. <u>Formal Appraisal Process</u> (Use Form PPP-03)

The Formal Appraisal Process assesses the job performance of instructional employees based upon **a** set **of** established performance expectations and is intended for use with the following employees:

- all 100% term teachers
- all probationary teachers
- have a permanent contract but request assignment to the Formal Appraisal Process (with approval of immediate supervisor)
- have a permanent contract but when job performance is not consistent with established performance expectations (as determined by the employee's immediate supervisor)
- have a permanent contract and meets established performance responsibilities, but can be assigned to either the Professional Development or Formal Appraisal Process upon the discretion of the administration

The Formal Appraisal Process will:

- be formative / directive in nature
- involve the employee, his/her immediate supervisor and others as determined appropriate by the supervisor (e.g. Area Supervisor, Coordinator of Human Resources, etc.) or as required by legislation, regulation, collective agreement(s)
- be conducted in consultation with the Human Resources Department and the Assistant Superintendent of the Department responsible for the work performed by the particular employee
- be conducted per requirements under the Education Act and/or the applicable collective agreement(s)
- include the following:
  - a review of personnel performance expectations related to the particular position
  - review of the criteria for performance appraisal
  - review of areas of concern / priority for attention
  - identification of performance goals

17.

- determination of procedures / instruments to be used to measure progress towards identified goals
- identification of strategies for achieving identified goals
- a time-frame for completion of the process
- regular observation of employee performance by the immediate supervisor
- regular meetings involving the employee and the supervisor related to the process and employee progress
- detailed documentation (by the supervisor) related to employee progress towards identified goals
- a year-end report, prepared by the supervisor and reviewed with the employee, submitted to the Coordinator of Human Resources upon completion of the appraisal process
- a written recommendation (prepared by the supervisor) to the Coordinator of Human Resources regarding the employee's future status within the Personnel Performance Program or other recommended course of action
- principals will have the discretion to decide what appraisal process will be used for term teachers with 3 years of consecutive term service in the same school regardless of the percentage of time of the contract.

4. <u>Intensive Appraisal Process</u> (Use Form — PPP-04)

The Intensive Appraisal Process assesses the job performance of an instructional employee:

- who is experiencing a specific and significant difficulty in meeting established performance expectations; and/or,
- whose overall job performance is below minimum acceptable standards

This process may be implemented at any time in situations wherein a significant weakness in employee performance has been identified and documented.

Employee Assignment to Intensive Appraisal Process...

- The employee's immediate supervisor shall advise the Coordinator of Human Resources and the Assistant Superintendent of the appropriate Department that a significant difficulty in employee performance has been observed; or that the employee's overall job performance is below minimum acceptable standards.
- The immediate supervisor, the Coordinator of Human Resources, and the Assistant Superintendent (or designate) of the appropriate Department shall meet to review the matter and consider placement of the employee in the Intensive Appraisal Process.

- The immediate supervisor, the Assistant Superintendent (or designate) of appropriate Department and the Coordinator of Human Resources shall meet with the employee and notify him/her of the assignment to the Intensive Appraisal Process and that his/her employment status is under review.

The Intensive Appraisal Process will be:

- summative in nature
- involve the employee, his/her immediate supervisor, the Coordinator of Human Resources and others as determined appropriate by the Coordinator of Human Resources and/or as required by legislation, regulation and/or collective agreement(s)
- be conducted by the immediate supervisor under the direction of the

  Human Resources Department and the Assistant Superintendent of the

  Department responsible for the work performed by the employee
- be conducted per requirements under the Education Act, other applicable legislation and/or the applicable collective agreement(s)
- include the following:
  - a review of personnel performance expectations related to the employee's position
  - a review of the identified concern(s)
  - development of a plan of action to address the concern(s) including recommended strategies, assessment and documentation procedures, and timelines for appraisal and improvement
  - regular observation and appraisal of employee performance by the immediate supervisor with documented reports submitted to the Assistant Superintendent of the appropriate Department and the Coordinator of Human Resources (copy to employee)
  - within the established time-frame, observation and appraisal of employee performance by the Assistant Superintendent of the appropriate Department (or designate) with documented reports submitted to the Coordinator of Human Resources (copy to employee)
  - a final report, prepared by the immediate supervisor and —the Assistant Superintendent (or designate) of the appropriate Department, submitted to the Coordinator of Human Resources (copy to employee)
  - a recommendation (in writing), prepared by the Assistant Superintendent (or designate) of the appropriate department, submitted to the Coordinator of Human Resources, regarding the assignment of the employee to either the Professional Development Appraisal Process or Formal Appraisal Process or other appropriate course of action

19.

- if non-disciplinary discharge is recommended, the Assistant Superintendent of the Department and the Coordinator of Human Resources will compile all documentation, and present the information to the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources for consideration
- the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources will present the information to the Superintendent of Schools for consideration by the Board (as appropriate)

♦ **Part-Time Term Teacher Appraisal Process (Use Form PPP-05)**

- Part-time term teachers will be appraised using the form *(PPP-05)*
- The Performance Responsibilities are the same as a regular teacher
- When evaluating term teachers that are less than 100% use the standard set of rubrics and descriptors as outlined for each rubric for a regular teacher.
- Twice a year this form is to be completed by the Supervisor (November 30 and April 30) and copies sent as indicated
- The form is to be signed by the Principal/Supervisor and/or Teacher
- Principals will have the discretion to decide which appraisal process will be used for term teachers with three years of consecutive term service in the same school year regardless of the percentage of time of the contract.

20.

PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

TITLE: **Elementary Teacher** **DEPARTMENT:** School

H.R. POSITION CODE: _____ **UPDATED:_____**

REPORTS TO:

School Principal or designate

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Valid Provincial Teacher Certificate
- Bachelor of Education with training in Elementary Curriculum and Methodology or equivalent qualifications
- Other qualifications as specified in *Human Resources* documents for the position to be filled.

OTHER ASSETS:

- Knowledge of PUBLIC SCHOOL PROGRAM (P.S.P.) and ATLANTIC PROVINCES EDUCATION FOUNDATION (A.P.E.F.) initiatives
- Knowledge and training in current instructional strategies
- Experience in contributing and managing accommodations and/or INDIVIDUALIZED PROGRAM PLANS (I.P.P.), INDIVIDUALIZED BEHAVIORAL PLANS (I.B.P.) for students with special needs
- Experience/knowledge of Technology in Education
- Strong interpersonal *I* communications / organizational and leadership skills
- Demonstrated commitment to on-going professional development
- Willingness to participate in the school community
- Willingness to contribute to the co-curricular/extra-curricular activities

JOB GOAL:

To teach and facilitate learning by implementing the PUBLIC SCHOOL PROGRAM (P.S.P.) in an environment that maximizes student academic and personal growth.

21.

PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

H.R. Position Code: _____

PERFORMANCE RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Demonstrates required knowledge of curriculum and program.
2. Provides and follows course outline and course objectives.
3. Demonstrates an ability to use a variety of methods to assess *Student Learning Outcomes.*
4. Demonstrates use of current instructional strategies.
5. Strives to meet the individual needs, interests, and abilities of the students.
6. Encourages students to develop as independent life-long learners.
7. Creates a classroom environment that is conducive to learning.
8. Prepares for assigned classes.
9. Assists the administration in implementing all policies and rules governing student life and conduct.
10. Maintains accurate, complete records as required by law, district policy, and administrative regulation.
11. Attends scheduled staff and department meetings.
12. Communicates regularly with parents (guardians) and students regarding student learning and progress.
13. Treats students and colleagues in a respectful manner.
14. Maintains and continues to improve professional competence.

TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT:

As specified in The Education Act of the Province, and Provincial Teachers Union (PROVINCIAL & LOCAL) Agreement.

EVALUATION:

Performance of this position will be evaluated in accordance with provisions of the *Regional School Board's Policy* on *Personnel Performance Program.*

22.

PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

TITLE: **Middle School/Junior High Teacher** **DEPARTMENT:** School

H.R. POSITION CODE:_____ **UPDATED:** _____

REPORTS TO:

School Principal or designate

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Valid Provincial Teacher's Certificate
- Bachelor of Education with a background in main subject area or equivalent qualifications
- Other qualifications as specified in *Human Resources* documents for the position to be filled

OTHER ASSETS:

- Knowledge of PUBLIC SCHOOL PROGRAM (P.S.P.) and ATLANTIC PROVINCES EDUCATION FOUNDATION (A.P .E.F.) initiatives.
- Knowledge and training in current instructional strategies.
- Experience in contributing and managing accommodations and/or INDIVIDUALIZED PROGRAM PLANS (I.P.P.), INDIVIDUALIZED BEHAVIORAL PLANS (I.B.P.) for students with special needs.
- Experience/knowledge of Technology in Education.
- Strong interpersonal / communications / organizational and leadership skills.
- Demonstrated commitment to on-going professional development.
- Experience/knowledge of MIDDLE SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY.
- Willingness to participate in the school community.
- Willingness to contribute to the co-curricular/extra curricular life of the school.

JOB GOAL:

To teach and facilitate learning by implementing the PUBLIC SCHOOL PROGRAM (P.S.P.) in an environment that maximizes student academic and personal growth.

23.

PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

H.R. Position Code: _____

PERFORMANCE RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Demonstrates required knowledge of curriculum and program.
2. Provides and follows course outline and course objectives.
3. Demonstrates an ability to use a variety of methods to assess *Student Learning Outcomes.*
4. Demonstrates use of current instructional strategies.
5. Strives to meet the individual needs, interests, and abilities of the students.
6. Encourages students to develop as independent life-long learners.
7. Creates a classroom environment that is conducive to learning.
8. Prepares for assigned classes.
9. Assists the administration in implementing all policies and rules governing student life and conduct.
10. Maintains accurate, complete records as required by law, district policy, and administrative regulation.
11. Attends scheduled staff and department meetings.
12. Communicates regularly with parents (guardians) and students regarding student learning and progress.
13. Treats students and colleagues in a respectful manner.
14. Maintains and continues to improve professional competence.

TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT:

As specified in The Education Act of the Province, and Provincial Teachers Union (PROVINCIAL & LOCAL) Agreement.

EVALUATION:

Performance of this position will be evaluated in accordance with provisions of the *Regional School Board's Policy* on *Personnel Performance Program.*

24.

PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

TITLE: **Senior High Teacher** **DEPARTMENT:** School

H.R. POSITION CODE: _____ **UPDATED:** _____

REPORTS TO:

School Principal or designate

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Valid Provincial Teacher's Certificate
- Bachelor Degree in main subject area or equivalent qualifications
- Bachelor of Education and training in secondary education or equivalent qualifications
- Other qualifications as specified in *Human Resources* documents for the position to be filled.

OTHER ASSETS:

- Knowledge of PUBLIC SCHOOL PROGRAM (P.S.P.) and ATLANTIC PROVINCES EDUCATION FOUNDATION (A.P.E.F.) initiatives.
- Knowledge and training in current instructional strategies.
- Experience in contributing and managing accommodations and/or INDIVIDUALIZED PROGRAM PLANS (I.P.P.), INDIVIDUALIZED BEHAVIORAL PLANS (I.B.P.) for students with special needs.
- Experience/knowledge of Technology in Education.
- Strong interpersonal / communications / organizational and leadership skills.
- Demonstrated commitment to on-going professional development.
- Experience/knowledge of MIDDLE SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY.
- Willingness to participate in the school community.
- Willingness to contribute to the co-curricular/ extra curricular life of the school.

JOB GOAL:

To teach and facilitate learning by implementing the PUBLIC SCHOOL PROGRAM (P.S.P.) in an environment that maximizes student academic and personal growth.

25.

PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

H.R. Position Code: _____

PERFORMANCE RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Demonstrates required knowledge of curriculum and program.
2. Provides and follows course. outline and course objectives.
3. Demonstrates an ability to use a variety of methods to assess *Student Learning Outcomes.*
4. Demonstrates use of current instructional strategies.
5. Strives to meet the individual needs, interests, and abilities of the students.
6. Encourages students to develop as independent life-long learners.
7. Creates a classroom environment that is conducive to learning.
8. Prepares for assigned classes.
9. Assists the administration in implementing all policies and rules governing student life and conduct.
10. Maintains accurate, complete records as required by law, district policy, and administrative regulation.
11. Attends scheduled staff and department meetings.
12. Communicates regularly with parents (guardians) and students regarding student learning and progress.
13. Treats students and colleagues in a respectful manner.
14. Maintains and continues to improve professional competence.

TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT:

As specified in The Education Act of the Province, and Provincial Teachers Union (PROVINCIAL & LOCAL) Agreement.

EVALUATION:

Performance of this position will be evaluated in accordance with provisions of the *Regional School Board's Policy* on *Personnel Performance Program.*

26.

PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

PERFORMANCE RESPONSIBILITY:
DEMONSTRATES REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE OF CURRICULUM AND PROGRAM

Use the descriptors to check the appropriate box.

☐ **DISTINGUISHED**

- Teacher displays extensive curriculum knowledge and relates curriculum to life experiences.
- The teacher uses a variety of program materials and learning resources to meet the needs of all students.

☐ **PROFICIENT**

- Teacher displays solid curriculum knowledge and makes connection to other disciplines.
- The teacher seeks outside program materials and learning resources to complement curriculum to meet the needs of most students.

☐ **BASIC**

- Teacher displays basic knowledge of the curriculum but cannot articulate connection with other disciplines.
- The teacher utilizes basic program materials and learning resources available in the school.

☐ **UNSATISFACTORY**

- The teacher does not demonstrate knowledge of or competency with the curriculum.
- The teacher shows little knowledge of program materials and learning resources available to keep course(s) current.

PERFORMANCE RESPONSIBILITY:
PROVIDES AND FOLLOWS COURSE OUTLINE AND COURSE OBJECTIVES

☐ **DISTINGUISHED**

- The teacher uses the Public School Program (PSP), Department of Education curriculum guides, and the Atlantic Provinces Educational Foundation (APEF) outcomes in the innovative integration of curriculum documents in his/her course outline.

☐ **PROFICIENT**

- The teacher's course objectives and outlines are based on the Public School Program (PSP), Department of Education curriculum guides, and Atlantic Provinces Educational Foundation (APEF) outcomes and the teacher refers to them extensively as they relate to his/her teaching responsibilities.

☐ **BASIC**

- The teacher is familiar with the Public School Program (PSP), Department of Education curriculum guides, and the Atlantic Provinces Educational Foundation (APEF) outcomes and refers to them as they relate to his/her teaching responsibilities and attempts to follow the prescribed program documents.

☐ **UNSATISFACTORY**

- The teacher has little knowledge of the Public School Program (PSP), Department of Education curriculum guides, and Atlantic Provinces Educational Foundation (APEF) outcomes, as they relate to his/her teaching responsibilities and does not follow the prescribed program documents.

PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

PERFORMANCE RESPONSIBILITY:
DEMONSTRATES AN ABILITY TO USE A VARIETY OF METHODS TO ASSESS *STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES*

Use the descriptors to check the appropriate box.

☐ **DISTINGUISHED**

- The teacher plans assessment strategies that address a full range of learnmg outcomes and uses assessment strategies to identify gaps in student learning and areas of future growth.

☐ **PROFICIENT**

- The teacher uses many assessment strategies that address a range of learning outcomes, such as skills, knowledge, and attitudes, and provides appropriate feedback to students.

☐ **BASIC**

- The teacher uses a variety of assessment strategies.

☐ **UNSATISFACTORY**

- The teacher uses a very limited number of assessment strategies.

PERFORMANCE RESPONSIBILITY:
DEMONSTRATES USE OF CURRENT INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

☐ **DISTINGUISHED**

- The teacher chooses from an extensive repertoire of instructional strategies to achieve identified learning outcomes. The teacher continuously refines skills associated with various models of teaching, such as inquiry, concept formation, concept attainment and cooperative learning.

☐ **PROFICIENT**

- The teacher is clearly aware of the importance of having a repertoire of instructional strategies and effectively utilizes these strategies in the classroom.

☐ **BASIC**

- The teacher is aware of the importance of having a repertoire of instructional strategies, and does try to implement one or two strategies in the classroom.

☐ **UNSATISFACTORY**

- The teacher has a very limited repertoire of instructional strategies. Frequently there is no match between the strategy used and the learning outcomes desired.

28.

PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

PERFORMANCE RESPONSIBILITY:
STRIVES TO MEET THE INDIVIDUAL NEEDS, INTERESTS, AND ABILITIES OF THE STUDENTS

Use the descriptors to check the appropriate box.

☐ **DISTINGUISHED**

- Teacher recognizes and displays a thorough understanding of the individual needs, interests, and abilities of the students by incorporating a variety of approaches and innovative strategies to enhance learning.

☐ **PROFICIENT**

- Teacher recognizes and displays knowledge of the individual needs, interests, and abilities of the students by incorporating approaches and strategies to enhance student learning.

☐ **BASIC**

- Teacher recognizes and displays the importance of understanding the individual needs, interests, and abilities of the student.

☐ **UNSATISFACTORY**

- Teacher displays little knowledge of the individual needs, interests, and abilities of the student.

PERFORMANCE RESPONSIBILITY:
ENCOURAGES STUDENTS TO DEVELOP AS INDEPENDENT LIFE-LONG LEARNERS

☐ **DISTINGUISHED**

- Teacher has students demonstrate through their active participation, curiosity, and attention to detail that they value the importance of life-long learning.

☐ **PROFICIENT**

- Teacher conveys a genuine enthusiasm for learning, and actively involves students in the process.

☐ **BASIC**

- Teacher communicates importance of learning.

☐ **UNSATISFACTORY**

- Teacher conveys a negative attitude towards learning.

29.

PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

PERFORMANCE RESPONSIBILITY:
CREATES A CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT WHICH IS CONDUCIVE TO LEARNING

Use the descriptors to check the appropriate box.

☐ **DISTINGUISHED**

- Organization of classroom materials, space and routines are seamless with students assuming some responsibility for a variety of tasks.
- Classroom decor is innovative, reflects current unit, and exhibits student work! involvement.
- Instructional goals and activities convey high expectations for learning and achievement.

☐ **PROFICIENT**

- Organization of classroom materials, space and routines is consistently evident.
- Classroom decor reflects curriculum units and displays students' work.
- Instructional goals and activities are maintained with high expectations for learning and student achievement.

☐ **BASIC**

- Organization of classroom materials, space and routines is evident.
- Classroom decor reflects curriculum.
- Instructional goals and activities convey minimal expectations for learning and student achievement.

☐ **UNSATISFACTORY**

- Classroom materials, space and routines are poorly organized.
- Classroom decor is non-evident.
- Instructional goals and activities convey low expectations for student achievement.

PERFORMANCE RESPONSIBILITY:
PREPARES FOR ASSIGNED CLASSES

☐ **DISTINGUISHED**

- Teacher demonstrates superior knowledge of the subject area, challenges students to reach beyond course requirements and written lesson plans are related to course objectives.

☐ **PROFICIENT**

- The teacher clearly demonstrates a great depth of knowledge in the subject area and written lesson plans are derived from an overall unit plan.

☐ **BASIC**

- The teacher demonstrates general knowledge of the subject area and has appropriate/written lesson plans.

☐ **UNSATISFACTORY**

- The teacher shows little knowledge of the subject area and does not have appropriate/written lesson plans.

PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

PERFORMANCE RESPONSIBILITY:
ASSISTS THE ADMINISTRATION IN IMPLEMENTING ALL POLICIES AND RULES GOVERNING STUDENT LIFE AND CONDUCT

Use the descriptors to check the appropriate box.

☐ **DISTINGUISHED**

- Monitoring of behaviour is subtle and preventative. Students monitor their own and their peers' behaviour, correcting one another respectfully.
- Student behaviour is always appropriate or teacher's response is highly effective and sensitive to student's needs.

☐ **PROFICIENT**

- Teacher is alert to student behaviour at all times and implements school policy when applicable.
- Student behaviour is appropriate or teacher's response is appropriate and respects student's dignity.

☐ **BASIC**

- The teacher is generally aware of student behavior and most students are aware of expectations pertaining to conduct.
- The teacher's response is generally consistent and respects student's dignity.

☐ **UNSATISFACTORY**

- Student behavior is not monitored and students are confused about expectations pertaining to conduct.
- Teacher's response is inconsistent and/or does not respects student's dignity.

PERFORMANCE RESPONSIBILITY:
MAINTAINS ACCURATE, COMPLETE RECORDS AS REQUIRED BY LAW, DISTRICT POLICY, AND ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION

☐ **DISTINGUISHED**

- Teacher's system for maintaining records is highly effective and easily understood by all concerned.

☐ **PROFICIENT**

- Teacher's system for maintaining records is organized and effective.

☐ **BASIC**

- Teacher's system for maintaining records is adequate.

☐ **UNSATISFACTORY**

- Teacher's system for maintaining records is in disarray resulting in errors and confusion.

31.

PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

PERFORMANCE RESPONSIBILITY:
ATTENDS SCHEDULED STAFF AND DEPARTMENT MEETINGS

Use the descriptors to check the appropriate box.

☐ **DISTINGUISHED**

- Teacher assists or leads in the planning, delivery and follow-up of scheduled staff and department meetings.

☐ **PROFICIENT**

- Teacher participates in scheduled staff and department meetings in a constructive manner.

☐ **BASIC**

- Teacher attends scheduled staff and department meetings.

☐ **UNSATISFACTORY**

- Teacher does not attend scheduled staff and department meetings, or attends and is routinely disruptive.

PERFORMANCE RESPONSIBILITY:
COMMUNICATES REGULARLY WITH PARENTS (GUARDIANS) AND STUDENTS REGARDING STUDENT LEARNING AND PROGRESS

☐ **DISTINGUISHED**

- Teacher communicates to parents/students on a frequent and timely basis, and contributions of parents/students are acknowledged in a positive manner.

☐ **PROFICIENT**

- Teacher communicates with parents/students on a regular basis and is available as needed to respond to their concerns.

☐ **BASIC**

- Teacher follows school's required procedures for communicating to parents/students and responses are adequate.

☐ **UNSATISFACTORY**

- Teacher provides minimal information to parents/students and does not respond or is insensitive to parental/students' concerns.

32.

PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

PERFORMANCE RESPONSIBILITY:
TREATS STUDENTS AND COLLEAGUES IN A RESPECTFUL MANNER

Use the descriptors to check the appropriate box.

☐ **DISTINGUISHED**

- Teacher's interaction with students and colleagues is appropriate and demonstrates general warmth, caring, and respect.

☐ **PROFICIENT**

- Teacher's interaction with students and colleagues is polite and professional.

☐ **BASIC**

- Teacher's interaction with students and colleagues is appropriate.

☐ **UNSATISFACTORY**

- Teacher's interaction with students and colleagues is inappropriate.

PERFORMANCE RESPONSIBILITY:
MAINTAINS AND CONTINUES TO IMPROVE PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE

☐ **DISTINGUISHED**

- Teacher seeks out opportunities for professional development and makes a systematic attempt to implement new ideas in his/her classroom.
- Teacher initiates important activities to contribute to the profession, such as mentoring new teachers, writing articles for publication, making presentations, and leadership in professional organizations.

☐ **PROFICIENT**

- Teacher seeks out opportunities for professional development to enhance content knowledge and pedagogical skill.
- Teacher participates actively in assisting other educators.

☐ **BASIC**

- Teacher participates in professional development activities to a limited extent.
- Teacher finds limited ways to contribute to the profession.

☐ **UNSATISFACTORY**

- Teacher does not engage in any professional development activities to enhance knowledge or skills.
- Teacher makes no effort to share knowledge with others or to assume professional responsibilities.

33.

INSTRUCTIONAL/TEACHER
PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

Preliminary Appraisal Form

School: _____

Instructional Staff Member: _____

Principal/Supervisor: _____

Date: _____

PART A: PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

Performance Responsibilities	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory
1. Demonstrates required knowledge of curriculum and program.				
2. Provides and follows course outline and course objectives				
3. Demonstrates an ability to use a variety of methods to assess Student Learning Outcomes.				
4. Demonstrates use of current instructional strategies.				
5. Strives to meet the individual needs, interests, and abilities of the students.				
6. Encourages students to develop as independent life-long learners.				
7. Creates a classroom environment that is conducive to learning.				
8. Prepares for assigned classes.				
9. Assists the administration in implementing all policies and rules governing student life and conduct.				
10. Maintains accurate, complete records as required by law, district policy, and administrative regulation.				
11. Attends scheduled staff and department meetings.				
12. Communicates regularly with parents (guardians) and students regarding student learning and progress.				
13. Treats students and colleagues in a respectful manner.				
14. Maintains and continues to improve professional competence.				

Numbers do not indicate priority.
34.

DEFINITIONS

Distinguished…	job-performance, which consistently exceeds established performance responsibilities for the assigned position (assignment to **Professional Development Appraisal Process**)
Proficient…	job-performance, which consistently meets or exceeds established performance responsibilities for the assigned position (assignment to **Professional Development or Formal Appraisal Process**) upon request of the teacher.
Basic…	job-performance, which meets established performance responsibilities for the assigned position (assignment to **Professional Development or Formal Appraisal Process** upon the discretion of the administrator)
Unsatisfactory…	job-performance which is consistently below established performance responsibilities for the assigned position (assignment to **Formal Appraisal Process**) ***or*** job-performance which portrays a specific and significant difficulty in meeting established performance responsibilities and/or is below minimum acceptable standards for the assigned position.

PART B: STAFF MEMBER ASSIGNMENT

(GOALS TO BE RECORDED ON APPROPRIATE FORM)

_____ has been placed in the

Professional Development Appraisal Process _____

Formal Appraisal Process _____

The next estimated Preliminary Appraisal Process begins

_____ _____ _____
Day Month Year

Preliminary Appraisal completed every 4 years.

Comments: (Principal/Supervisor/Teacher)

_____

_____

_____

Additional Comments on a separate sheet.

_____ _____
Signature of Principal/Supervisor Date

_____ _____
Signature of Staff Member Date

COPIES TO: Teacher
Principal/Supervisor
Teacher's Personnel File/Human Resources

35.

INSTRUCTIONAL/TEACHER

PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

Professional Development Appraisal Process

Year-end Report

School: _____

Year 1 ☐ **Year 2** ☐ **Year 3** ☐ **Year 4** ☐

_____ has participated in the Professional Development Appraisal Process during the period _____ to _____ with the following results:

Goal(s) Established:

_____

_____

_____

Strategy(is) for Goal Achievement:

_____

_____

_____

Time-line for Completion:

Teacher and Principal/Supervisor have agreed that goals established should be attained by _____

Progress to-date: (To be completed and submitted by April 30th)

_____

_____

_____

_____ _____

Signature of Principal/Supervisor Date

_____ _____

Signature of Staff Member Date

COPIES TO:	Teacher Principal/Supervisor Teacher's Personnel File/Human Resources

36.

INSTRUCTIONAL/TEACHER
PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE PROGRAM
Formal Appraisal Process
Year-end Report

School: _____

_____ is participating in the Formal Appraisal Process…

Instructional with the following results:

Goals(s) Established:

_____

_____

_____

Strategy(ies) for Goal Achievement:

_____

_____

_____

Time-line for Completion:

Teacher and Principal/Supervisor have agreed that goals established should be attained by _____

Progress to-date: (To be completed and submitted by April 30th)

	Satisfactory Progress Yes	No
_____	☐	☐
_____	☐	☐

Contract status of the teacher: ☐ Term ☐ Probationary ☐ Permanent

This section applies to Term/Probationary Teachers Only	This section applies to Permanent Contract Teachers
I would not recommend this term/probationary teacher for further employment. ☐	I would recommend this permanent contract teacher be placed in the • Professional Development Appraisal Process ☐ • Formal Appraisal Process (Circle Year- 1 2 3 4) ☐ • Intensive Appraisal Process ☐

_____
Signature of Principal/Supervisor

Comments of Principal, Supervisor and/or Teacher

_____ _____
Signature of Principal/Supervisor Date

_____ _____
Signature of Staff Member Date

COPIES TO: Teacher
Principal/Supervisor
Teacher's Personnel File/Human Resources

INSTRUCTIONAL/TEACHER
PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE PROGRAM
Intensive Appraisal Process
Final Report

School: _____

During the period _____to _____.

_____ has participated in the Intensive Appraisal Process.
Teacher

RESULTS:

Goal(s) Established:

	Satisfactory Progress Yes	No
_____	☐	☐
_____	☐	☐

We (Principal/Supervisor and Assistant Superintendent) recommend that _____:
Teacher

☐ will continue in the Intensive Appraisal Process

☐ be placed in the Formal Appraisal Process _____

☐ Other: _____

_____ _____
(Teacher) Date

_____ _____
(Principal/Supervisor) Date

_____ _____
(Assistant Superintendent of Programs & Student Services) Date

COPIES TO:	Teacher Principal/Supervisor Teacher's Personnel File/Human Resources

38.

INSTRUCTIONAL/TEACHER
PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE PROGRAM
Part-Time Term Teacher Appraisal Form

School: _____

Instructional Staff Member_____

Principal/Supervisor: _____

Date: _____

PART A: PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

Performance Responsibilities	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory
1. Demonstrates required knowledge of curriculum and program.			
2. Provides and follows course outline and course objectives.			
3. Demonstrates an ability to use a variety of methods to assess *Student Learning Outcomes*.			
4. Demonstrates use of current instructional strategies.			
5. Strives to meet the individual needs, interests, and abilities of the students.			
6. Encourages students to develop as independent life-long learners.			
7. Creates a classroom environment that is conducive to learning.			
8. Prepares for assigned classes.			
9. Assists the administration in implementing all policies and rules governing student life and conduct.			
10. Maintains accurate, complete records as required by law, district policy, and administrative regulation.			
11. Attends scheduled staff and department meetings.			
12. Communicates regularly with parents (guardians) and students regarding student learning and progress.			
13. Treats students and colleagues in a respectful manner.			
14. Maintains and continues to improve professional competence.			

Numbers do not indicate priority.

39.

Definitions

Proficient…	job-performance, which consistently meets or exceeds established performance responsibilities for the assigned position (assignment to **Professional Development or Formal Appraisal Process**) upon request of the teacher.
Basic…	job-performance, which meets established performance responsibilities for the assigned position (assignment to **Professional Development or Formal Appraisal Process** upon the discretion of the administrator)
Unsatisfactory…	job-performance which is consistently below established performance responsibilities for the assigned position (assignment to **Formal Appraisal Process**) ***or*** job-performance which portrays a specific and significant difficulty in meeting established performance responsibilities and/or is below minimum acceptable standards for the assigned position.

Comments: (Principal/Supervisor/Teacher)

_____

_____

This box completed, if necessary, on the April 30 due date.

I would not recommend this term teacher for further employment ☐

_____ _____
Signature of Teacher Date

_____ _____
Signature of Principal/Supervisor Date

COPIES TO:	Teacher Principal/Supervisor Teacher's Personnel File/Human Resources

40.