

**EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP OF TEACHER EVALUATION AND  
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA**

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Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of  
the School of Education in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Education

University of Pittsburgh

2016

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH  
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

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## **EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP OF TEACHER EVALUATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA**

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University of Pittsburgh, 2016

This study examined the effects of Section 1123 of Act 82 of 2012, a section of an omnibus bill relating to the Public School Code of 1949 (P.L. 30, No. 14), on selected school districts in Southwestern Pennsylvania. This specific section of the omnibus bill of amendments, commonly known as the Educator Effectiveness Model, relates to educator effectiveness and included policies and procedures relating to rating forms for and suspension of professional educators in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. School administrators, union presidents, and classroom teachers have all been affected by this legislation over the past four years, be it through trainings regarding the legislation or the actual implementation of the legislation at the local level. The purpose of this study is to examine the effects the legislation has had in these selected school districts relating to evaluation and supervision processes, and whether or not these changes have had any effect on professional development offerings that have been occurring in any of these districts.

Based on the findings of this study, the legislation has had a profound effect in these selected districts in Southwestern Pennsylvania. Many school administrators and union presidents report the additional paperwork, protocols, and focus on data (both student-level and

observation-based) have helped to increase stress levels in the schools, both in administrators and teachers. These participants also report that the use of evaluation and supervision data is inconsistent amongst these districts, and amongst the buildings in each of these districts. Although some of the union presidents responded favorably to aligning professional development opportunities with data collected through the evaluation and supervision processes, the manner in which this would occur, or how to best implement the process, was not consistently reported by the participants in the study.

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Educators, parents, politicians, and researchers have proposed various aspects of education reform for decades. However, the focus on improving our nation's educational system intensified when the National Commission on Excellence in Education released *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform* in 1983. When many of our nation's leaders learned that our academic prowess had slipped behind that of countries such as Germany, Japan, and China, educational reform became a matter of national pride (Little, 1993). Since the release of the report, many reforms in education have come and gone, addressing various topics such as scheduling, curriculum, teaching resources, technology, and assessments. Currently, the focus has shifted to improving and reforming teacher evaluation and supervision practices, often known as teacher effectiveness (The New Teacher Project, 2010).

Standardized testing has brought greater scrutiny to the teaching methodologies and outcomes employed in our nation's classrooms, and the profession of teaching has never been as dissected as it is now. Although every teacher is required to be evaluated and supervised throughout an academic year, the manner in which this supervision and evaluation process occurs varies. According to Weisberg, Sexton, Mulhern, and Keeling (2009), not only are the current methods of supervision and evaluation "ineffective, the frequency and length of evaluations are also inadequate" (p. 21). A more effective teacher evaluation model predicated on professional development and growth for every stakeholder may lead to greater gains in

instructional methodologies, which, in turn, may help increase student achievement. Unfortunately, 73% of teachers surveyed by the New Teacher Project said their most recent evaluation did not identify any areas for improvement and only 45% of teachers who did have development areas identified said they lacked any type of useful support to make improvements in their instructional methodologies (Weisberg et al., 2010, p. 6). Similarly, The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (2010) argued, “in the absence of useful feedback, most teachers’ performance plateau by their third or fourth year on the job. Everyone loses as a result” (p. 3). With this in mind, the focus on evaluation and supervision has shifted to the type and frequency of feedback that a teacher receives in order to improve his or her craft. The manner in which feedback occurs is often varied in form and function. For instance, feedback from administrators, mentors, consultants, and colleagues can be beneficial if utilized properly and framed by professional improvement. However, this focus on professional growth is in stark contrast to the types of feedback used solely for evaluative measures.

However, educational reform is not an easy and fast process. Many barriers to change exist and multiple stakeholders need to examine and develop the implementation of reform movements necessary to make positive changes to the future of education in our nation. Nevertheless, every student in every classroom deserves the opportunity to learn from research-based best practices. The New Teacher Project (2010) states, “to ensure that every child learns from the most effective teachers possible, schools must be able to gauge their teachers’ performance fairly and accurately” (p. 2). By implementing new comprehensive evaluation methods, school boards are recognizing the challenge and accepting the professional work of both administrators and educators to improve the teaching and learning in our nation’s schools.

## **1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Over the years, school districts have used varying forms for their teacher evaluation and supervision processes. One possible issue with this was that there was no unified or defined way for districts to determine teacher effectiveness and professional development goals (The New Teacher Project, 2010; Toch, 2008; Goldstein & Noguera, 2006). Compounding this problem was the fact that evaluation policies and protocols vary throughout the different buildings within a school district. For instance, there may be one building in the district that utilizes walk-throughs in a very specific and systematic way, whereas another building may not do walk-throughs at all. Similarly, one district may utilize walk-throughs as a means to collect data to inform the professional staff of observed competencies, whereas another district may use other methods to collect data about observed competencies. Another issue may be how principals and other administrators use evaluation and supervision data to identify professional development needs (Goldstein & Noguera, 2006; Weisberg et al., 2010). In this case, there may be one principal in the district who uses the data from teacher practice to inform professional development needs throughout the building, identifying strengths and weaknesses observed throughout the professional staff. There may be other principals in the district who go through the evaluation and supervision practices to just fulfill this mandated function and not to use it as a means to improve teaching. In this previous example, there is no correlation between observed competencies and professional development needs.

In some districts, the decision-making process relative to professional development opportunities for the teaching staff is stagnant. For instance, some districts use the same model of professional development year in and year out, even though every teacher is different, and every teacher's needs are different (Danielson, 2011; Looney, 2007). With a more contemporary look

toward teacher evaluation and supervision policies, an increased opportunity exists for alignment with professional development needs. For instance, Charlotte Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* highlights 22 components for teachers to analyze and improve upon in order to increase their effectiveness (Danielson, 2011). Through a more thorough and structured system of evaluation and supervision practices and policies, administrators can target areas of growth and align them to one of these components. Instead of an evaluation process aimed at arriving at an evaluation score, administrators and teachers can conduct a shared discussion framed around identifying areas of growth and identifying professional development opportunities aligned to these areas (Danielson, 2011).

## 1.2 DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Per-Pupil Expenditure** – The amount of money schools use to pay for services related to the instruction of a child within the school district. This amount directly relates to the funding of providing instruction in the classroom and classroom-related activities. For the purpose of this study, this amount is calculated by taking the sum of expenditures for the school district and dividing this total by the total number of students in the district (Cornman, 2015).

**Pittsburgh Business Times Guide to Western Pennsylvania Schools** – This annual publication ranks the schools in 105 school districts in Western Pennsylvania (primarily Southwestern) based on the most recent results of the Pennsylvania Department of Education's State System of Assessment (PSSA). The analysis examines the three most recent years' data, giving the most weight to the most recent school year. The *Pittsburgh Business Times* also ranks the districts based on an “overachiever rank,” which examines a school district's performance

relative to the percent of economically disadvantaged students in the district. For the purpose of this study, selected school districts are those districts that earn a spot in the top 25% of the *Pittsburgh Business Times* Rankings.

**Professional Development** – A set of comprehensive, sustained, and intensive learning experiences designed to increase the knowledge base of the teachers in a school district. This set includes, but is not limited to, workshops, online classes, traditional coursework, seminars, trainings, and lectures (National Staff Development Council, 2016).

**Race to the Top** – This grant program created by the United States Department of Education set forth expectations states must meet in order to apply for a cumulative value of \$4 billion in additional governmental funding. In order for states to be eligible for this grant, they are required to submit applications to federal reviewers that propose education reform efforts aimed at four over-arching targets: adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy, building data systems that measure student growth and success, informing teachers and principals about how they can improve instruction, and recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most, to turn around our lowest-achieving schools (U.S. Department of Education, 2016).

**School Performance Profile** – A rating system designed and utilized by the Pennsylvania Department of Education that includes multiple measures of student achievement, such as state assessment proficiency scores, student academic growth scores, college readiness scores, attendance rates, promotion rates, graduation rates, and industry-designed assessment proficiency scores. This yearly rating is publicized every fall on the PA School Performance

Website, [www.paschoolperformance.org](http://www.paschoolperformance.org). The system also displays basic demographic and financial information for each district in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

**Section 1123 of Act 82** – Section 1123 of Act 82 of 2012 is the section of an omnibus bill relating to the Public School Code of 1949 (P.L. 30, No. 14). This specific section relates to educator effectiveness and includes policies and procedures relating to rating forms for and suspension of professional educators in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. This section of the omnibus bill is commonly known as the “Educator Effectiveness Model.” For the purposes of this study, Section 1123 of Act 82 of 2012 will be referred to as Act 82 (Pennsylvania General Assembly, 2016).

**Teacher Evaluation** – The process of collecting and using information about a teacher’s classroom performance in order to judge the performance of a teacher. Teacher evaluation often occurs in two manners: formative and summative. Formative evaluation occurs regularly to help improve the instruction in the classroom. Summative evaluation occurs periodically (typically once or twice a school year) in order to make personnel decisions (Darling-Hammond, Wise, & Pease, 1983).

**Teacher Induction Program** – A defined program that every school district in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania must create and implement for newly hired teachers. Teacher induction programs are designed to transition new teachers into the profession and into the culture of the district and building through meetings, workshops, trainings, and seminars relating to various topics that a teacher must understand in order to do his or her job efficiently and appropriately in the context of the specific district. Suggested topics for a teacher induction plan may include, but are not limited to, ordering supplies, curriculum, teacher evaluation, building policies and protocols, district policies and protocols, and technology (Wong, 2002).

**Trainings** – Learning opportunities designed to teach a defined set of skills. Trainings are typically a one-time event designed to create automaticity of a required skill (Morrison, 2016).

### **1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Although teacher evaluation and supervision policies and practices have been studied before, the current landscape of public education is focused on improving teacher effectiveness and reforming teacher evaluation and supervision policies and practices. Important to a systematic review of the literature relevant to the history of teacher evaluation and supervision practices and how they are aligned to professional development needs is an examination of adult learning research and theory in order to determine the best types of professional development models that meet adult needs. With this task in mind, this study focused on the following three questions:

- 1) How has the Educator Effectiveness Model influenced the way selected school districts<sup>1</sup> in Southwestern Pennsylvania have implemented or managed their teacher evaluation and supervision processes?
- 2) How do selected Southwestern Pennsylvania School Districts offer professional development correlated to evaluation and supervision plans?

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<sup>1</sup> “Selected” school districts were identified as the top 25% of districts listed in the 2015 *Pittsburgh Business Times* Guide to Western Pennsylvania Schools. See Chapter 1, Section 2 for a more detailed description of this analysis.

- 3) How do union leaders in selected Southwestern Pennsylvania School Districts perceive the implementation of the Educator Effectiveness Model and its impact on teacher performance?

Through examining these three questions in selected school districts in Southwestern Pennsylvania, I planned to determine exactly how the implementation of Act 82 has affected school districts, administrators, and teachers. Specifically, I wanted to explore the legislation's effect on professional development and teacher performance in the classroom.

## **1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The advent of the United States Department of Education's Race to the Top Grants precipitated increased rigor and updated frameworks for statewide evaluation models, increasing the focus on evaluation and supervision practices and policies. Across the nation, many states and districts have revamped their evaluation and supervision practices and policies, an action met with highly publicized criticism, public concern, and opposition from teacher unions.

### **1.4.1 Personal Significance**

My initial interest in teacher supervision and evaluation began while working as a building-level and district-level administrator at Belle Vernon Area School District. The district has been proactive with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's new Teacher Effectiveness Model, which went into effect for the 2013-2014 school year, by piloting materials and protocols and providing feedback to our local Intermediate Units and the Pennsylvania Department of

Education. The struggle some districts experience in implementing the new evaluation system illuminates the importance of a structured outline of best practices from districts that have adopted similar models aimed at identifying targeted areas of professional development as a way of improving teacher effectiveness.

My frustrations as a teacher led to an increased focus in the area of teacher evaluation and supervision. Not only did I want to analyze the best way in which to perform this function once I became an administrator, but I also wanted to understand the reason for this function in relation to student achievement. It became important to me to see how districts align teacher evaluation and supervision practices with professional development needs in order to inspire growth in student achievement. As I began to explore this topic, I realized that there are vast differences regarding supervisory practices within my own district. This revelation increased my level of inquiry regarding this subject.

#### **1.4.2 Significance of Practice**

Teacher evaluation and supervision policies have a multifaceted purpose in the field of education. Not only do these policies define a field of study, they also determine a primary function of the school administrator. Complicating the matter is that teacher evaluation and supervision practices are closely aligned with professional growth. How these topics are intertwined has been a topic of debate for decades. In order to determine how far the field of education has evolved, we must first acknowledge this multifaceted purpose, explore how each purpose affects the adult learner, and determine which professional development models best satisfy these needs.

## **1.5 ORGANIZATION OF THE CHAPTERS**

The remaining chapters of the study are organized in a systematic manner to help the reader understand the current literature (chapter 2) relating to teacher evaluation and supervision models, the needs of the adult learner, and the professional development models that meet the needs of the adult learner. An overview of the research study and methodology (chapter 3) is immediately following the review of literature. Within this overview, the intent of the study, the limitations of the study, the research questions involved in the study, and the population and sample of the study relative to teacher evaluation and supervision models used in professional development practices are discussed. Chapter 4 includes an analysis of the data gathered from the surveys outlined in Chapter 3. The findings and implications for practice relative to the research from the review of literature comprise the content of Chapter 5. Finally, the conclusions provides a summary of the intent of the study as well as some of the most prominent findings and implications.

## **1.6 PLAN FOR REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Integral to a complete review of the literature relating to the background of contemporary teacher evaluation and supervision models is an exploration of the topic in federal and state documents, popular scholarly educational journals, and professional full-print books endorsed by ASCD (formerly the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development). What follows is consideration of the needs of the adult learner through multiple lenses, not just relating to teaching and education. This comprehensive examination of professional literature relating to

the vast array of needs of the adult learner culminates in the identification and examination of professional development and adult learning settings that best meet these varied and appropriate needs in order to provide an optimum environment for new learning to affect professional performance and competencies.

## **2.0 REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

### **2.1 BACKGROUND OF CONTEMPORARY TEACHER EVALUATION AND SUPERVISION MODELS IN THE UNITED STATES**

Any study of teacher evaluation and/or supervision cannot be considered comprehensive without discussing the multi-faceted role of supervision in relation to teacher evaluation and professional development in the public school system. For the purposes of this study, it is important to consider the history of teacher evaluation and supervision in order to fully understand how different the new Educator Effectiveness Model is from historical methods.

While supervision and evaluation are linked in current literature and contemporary practice, traditional administrators and scholars may regard teacher supervision as a separate entity from teacher evaluation. Thus, the relationship of supervision with evaluation and a description of its application as field of study, a function of the administrator, and a means for school reform has particular utility in this study.

According to Thomas Sergiovanni (1985), both practical and theoretical perspectives to supervision in relation to its application as a field of study relevant to the classroom exist. In this sense, the theoretical perspective aims to highlight what administrators can observe in the classroom while the practical perspective provides a forum where the teacher and administrator work together to define the realities involving the students, instructional strategies, and teacher

competencies occurring in the classrooms. Similarly, school administrators view supervision as a function of their job description. In this sense, the administrator is responsible for providing supervision to ensure teachers are regularly implementing research-based methods in the classroom that are proven to increase student engagement and achievement, regardless of the content or the student (Nolan & Huber, 1989). The difference in these two views of supervision lies in the intricacies of the classroom. For instance, not every classroom is the same, nor are the students who populate those classrooms. The art and science of teaching requires flexibility in order to reach the needs of the ever-changing students and communities served. With this in mind, the third function of supervision has utility: administrators and teachers meet about strengths and weaknesses as a means of school reform. Much like the expectation in most of our nation's classrooms, this function assures a certain level of reflection on the part of the teacher in order to reach a deeper understanding of professional development needs and their impact on school reform efforts. Nolan and Huber (1989) claim "students, like their teachers, learn more when knowledge develops through reflection" (p. 142).

Although these three functions of supervision seem to be delicately intertwined, they serve three very distinct functions in schools. When you consider the vast number of schools, administrators, and teachers involved in public education, in addition to the roles and responsibilities that differ in each district, it is easy to deduce that there would be a plethora of varied protocols and policies in place in relation to teacher evaluation and supervision. Each district's protocols and policies, however unique or standard, aim to serve the multifaceted roles of placing supervision as a field of study in the realm of scholarship, a function of the administrator due to legal mandates from state and federal boards of education, and a means for school reform initiatives and politics. As a practitioner, I am situated with a clear vantage of

these three roles, providing an opportunity to help educate others on the importance of supervision and evaluation in relation to these different functions.

### **2.1.1 Background of Binary Systems of Evaluation and Supervision**

Across the nation, the era of accountability in education has transitioned from an emphasis on student achievement scores on standardized tests to a greater emphasis on educator effectiveness. Garrett (2011) believes “it’s not surprising that legislators would demand ever-greater accountability to make sure they’re getting a good return on their educational investment” (p. 40). Part of the emphasis on educator effectiveness can be attributed to the flaws of many of the evaluation systems that have been in place for long years in school districts across the country. Both teachers and administrators recognize the glaring weaknesses of the former and current methods of evaluation, and believe there is reason for enhancements to the system. One glaring weakness in the previous systems is the notion that the vast majority of teachers, although rated highly by their superiors, do not enter the profession as highly effective instructors. This includes those with strong academic backgrounds, who may take several years to hone their craft and acquire the repertoire of skills necessary to meet the needs of all of their students (Goldstein & Noguera, 2006).

Schools exist across the country in which both teachers and administrators agree that underperforming teachers are present. Nevertheless, school systems allow these same teachers to continue to perform at this level without any repercussions or extensive training (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2011). Goldstein and Noguera (2006) claim, “teachers’ unions typically receive the bulk of the blame for defending colleagues of questionable competence. It is equally true, however, that many administrators fail to carry out regular and meaningful

evaluations” (p. 32). Current systems of evaluation in a typical public education setting consist of a single, fleeting classroom visit by a principal or other building administrator, yielding a checklist of classroom conditions for the teacher. These types of evaluations are included in unreliable teacher evaluation systems that often don't directly address the quality of instruction, much less measure actual learning that is occurring in the classroom (Toch, 2008). Garrett (2011) claims that current teacher evaluation methods are flawed because:

most evaluations are conducted for compliance purposes and do not help the teacher learn how to be more effective, the time principals have to observe teachers is extremely limited, and evaluations generally don't delve into evidence that students are mastering the content, the schedule for evaluations is based on local bargaining agreements and not on the needs of teachers, and evaluators rarely use their observations to suggest professional development that would help the teacher. (p. 41)

Given these concerns, states and commonwealths have spent a considerable amount of time and money revamping their teacher evaluation and supervision policies and practices. In addition to Departments of Education, private foundations, such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Broad Foundation, and the Walton Family Foundation, have committed billions of dollars to K-12 institutions that have vowed to improve and reform their outdated teacher evaluation models (Funding Center, 2016). Since many states and districts watched their funding decrease over the past decade, the possibility of additional funding from the competitive grant programs listed above and others may have spurred reform efforts that these entities otherwise would not have created and implemented. However, it is important to note that these initiatives have been met with considerable criticism from various stakeholders, including teacher unions.

One common model that states and districts have adopted is rubric-based; Robert Marzano's *The Art and Science of Teaching* and Charlotte Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* are examples. According to Danielson (2007), "the framework aims to describe all of teaching, in all its complexity. It is comprehensive, referring not only to what occurs in the classroom but also to what happens behind the scenes and beyond the classroom walls" (p. 19). School entities are relying on rubric-based models in order to develop a common definition of research-based practices that comprise the entire body of work teachers do in the classroom. The *Framework for Teaching* is rooted in the constructivist approach, where the primary goal of education is for students to understand important concepts and to develop important cognitive skills. It is the teacher's responsibility to accomplish those goals while implementing daily lessons in their classrooms (Danielson, 2007). This model is based upon teachers' abilities to reflect upon their practice. Danielson (2007) argues, "the framework for teaching does not endorse any particular teaching style for all teachers; it does, however, enable educators to engage in conversations about the appropriateness of choices made at many points in a lesson or unit" (p. 25). Additionally, the evaluators are trained to be objective and follow a detailed and specific rubric, leading to a score distribution gathered from evaluation data across a school that is a statistically reasonable bell curve. This type of practice that administrators and teachers follow may be completely different than those of some districts with stagnant evaluation practices in place, where most teachers get the highest rating unless there are significant, repetitive concerns (Garrett, 2011). Danielson's work has helped shape the framework of the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Educator Effectiveness Initiative (Act 82 of 2012), which became law in June 2012. This framework outlined in Act 82 of 2012 is an example of how to evaluate teaching practices within a rubric, only using observed evidence to rate a teacher on a specific set

of standards. However, the framework is limited by the familiarity of teaching practices amongst teachers. Significant amounts of professional development need to accompany this rubric in order for administrators to have a meaningful conversation with teachers regarding the substance of the rubric.

Other models tie mandated professional development goals directly to a classroom observation cycle. In a study of the Chilean National Teacher Evaluation System (CNTES) from 2008, the authors focused on how the multiple stakeholders worked together on a compromise to create a new teacher evaluation model based on an earlier version of Charlotte Danielson's 1996 *Framework for Teaching*. In the CNTES, teachers who attained the level of "Outstanding" or "Competent" could take a content level test to earn merit pay for their performance as a teacher. Those who attained levels of "Basic" or "Unsatisfactory" had to participate in mandated professional development or be dismissed. Although this movement occurred in Chile in the 1990's, there are many similarities to several of the components of the Race to the Top requirements relating to U.S. Teacher Evaluation. Similarly, countries like China are also struggling with implementation of new evaluation practices, where administrators and researchers face a challenge of how to deal with the relationship between reward/punishment and developmental teacher evaluation. Ultimately, their goal is to make teacher evaluation better serve teacher professional development (Liu & Zao, 2013). As the school districts in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania wrestle with the implementation of their new Teacher Effectiveness Model, educational and political leaders may benefit from examining the success and rationale from each of the stakeholder's lenses.

Taut, Santelices, Araya, and Manzi carefully explored the program theory of the Chilean Ministry of Education, the Teacher's Union, the Municipalities Association, and the

Implementers (Schools). Each had different reasoning for evaluation reform, and each viewed the program as successful through different lenses. The main agreement between each of the groups was that improved teaching practices would help to increase student achievement, an area that the nation felt needed to improve given its lackluster assessment results. In their analysis relating to the desired outcomes of the model, the authors argued that the system will provide every stakeholder with, “the information about the weaknesses of teachers’ practices and the areas that need most support. This information will allow redesigning the curricula of teacher education programs and, in the long run, improve education quality” (Taut et al., 2010). This approach would be refreshing in a U.S. era filled with significant gaps between teacher preparation programs and the skillset required of the ever-changing profession of education.

### **2.1.2 The Function of the Clinical Supervision Model**

Perhaps an equally important component of teacher evaluation and supervision models is the function of the clinical supervision model itself. Oftentimes, the reason teachers and supervisors work together is in order to enhance practice, both the teacher’s and the supervisor’s, with the goal of creating the optimal environment for student learning (Garman, 1986; Pajak, 2001). This explanation leads to several underlying questions. For instance, what role does a clinical supervision model serve? What makes teacher evaluation and supervision a paramount priority to educational leaders, school districts, and policymakers? According to Knoff (1988), clinical supervision can be defined as an “intensive, hierarchical, interpersonally focused relationship involving a supervisor who oversees the development of a supervisee’s professional knowledge, skill, confidence, objectivity, and interpersonal interactions on behalf of or with a specified client for the purpose of facilitating and improving instruction” (Knoff, 1988, p. 241).

Unlike the medical description of *clinical*, which describes illness or pathological disease, this term was developed by Morris L. Cogan and his team at Harvard in the 1950's as a way to describe to the empirical components of supervision in the classroom (Cogan, 1972). Within this definition is the importance of improving competence and service delivery, which is not the only function of the clinical supervision model. Knoff (1988) believes "during clinical supervision, supervisors are attempting to evaluate, and then enhance, supervisees' professional knowledge, skill, confidence, objectivity, and interpersonal interactions so that effective service delivery is attained from both an administrative and an educational perspective" (p. 250). Similarly, administrators must spend time soliciting teachers' thoughts about their instructional plans, both at the micro level and macro level, probing teacher thinking with questions. In this role, the administrators are charged with providing objective feedback from observations in a non-threatening manner, and with some sense of the potential impact of their words on teachers and ultimately student learning in the classroom (McNergny & Francis, 1986; Pajak, 2001). In order to successfully complete these functions, administrators must possess the ability to not only objectively judge a professional's competence, but also have a better understanding of all of his or her teachers and the nature of teaching. Many administrators accomplish this task by gaining the trust of the professional through personal relationships.

Within the construct of accomplishing this task, administrators must walk a fine line between being a supervisor, a consultant, and a counselor. Knoff (1988) argues that although the clinical supervision process appears to be "a fairly straightforward process, it sometimes becomes confounded because the clinical supervision model being used requires shifts into either a consultation or counseling model" (p. 240). Likewise, when administrators facilitate the development of professional growth and identity of another colleague, the most critical element

is to understand and empathize as fully as possible with that other person and try to look through his/her lens to understand what that other person believes and feels at his/her core (Pajak, 1986). These soft skills allow a supervisor to not only understand the lens of the supervisee, but also create an environment where change is more likely to occur.

Perhaps the most critical component of the clinical supervision model is function of reflection in developing one's professional identity. Garman (1986) argues, "the teacher who maintains a reflective approach toward his or her practice continues to develop a mature professional identity" (p. 18). But in order for professionals to partake in this endeavor, they must first grapple with the difference between theoretical perspectives and practical perspectives. At the heart of the mismatch between professional knowledge perceived as theoretical and the actual context and practice of supervision is that teachers operate in a clinical role every day in the classroom rather than theoretical mode based in research (Sergiovanni, 1985). This separation between what ought to be and what really happens is often the substance of pre- and post-observation conferences, where the ability of teachers to reflect allows for the exchange of information that supervisors cannot see during an observation or in an evaluation. In their study of the clinical observation cycle, McNergny and Francis (1986) found that "clinical episodes were dominated by a pattern of teachers giving information, opinions, or suggestions, followed by supervisors giving information and then either offering support to teachers or asking them for more information" (p. 198). As part of this transmission of information, administrators use their questioning skills to try to understand the thoughts and feelings behind an educator's practice in order to help guide the educator through a reflection process aimed at identifying both the strengths and weakness in a classroom in order to better serve the students. However, this level and function of reflection is a misconstrued, often-forgotten aspect of the educational and

observation process (Garman, 1986). Thus, it is important to explore models that enable educators to establish their own professional identity and implement changes through a clinical supervision cycle with a reflection component.

As a practitioner situated between the three functions of supervision and evaluation, I have had the opportunity to see the clinical supervision process carried out in a manner befitting the literature, where the emphasis is on professional growth, not merely a function mandated by law. However, in my past experiences in the classroom, I have also seen this process watered down to its most basic components, minimizing the importance of self-reflection and its relevance to professional growth. As a critical component of Charlotte Danielson's *Framework For Teaching*, the reflective practices have been the components most difficult for many teachers in my current district, primarily for those teachers who have never been asked to be reflective of their own practices prior to this model.

### **2.1.3 Differentiated Supervision**

Over the past decade, one recent trend in teacher evaluation supervision relates to the notion of differentiated supervision. In differentiated supervision, professional employees develop an action plan for professional development unique to their needs and interests instead of participation in a traditional observation cycle. According to the New Teacher Project (2010):

Evaluations should provide all teachers with regular feedback that helps them grow as professionals, no matter how long they have been in the classroom. Evaluations should give schools the information they need to build the strongest possible instructional teams, and help districts hold school leaders accountable for supporting each teacher's development. Most importantly, they should focus everyone in a school system, from

teachers to the superintendent, on what matters most: keeping every student on track to graduate from high school ready for success in college or a career. (p. 1)

Clearly, each teacher in a school building has unique needs and professional interests. Under differentiated supervision, teachers have a choice in the types of professional development activities they will participate in over the course of the school year that will have the most profound effects on their students.

Charlotte Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* addresses the importance of differentiated supervision within Domain 4: Professionalism. The framework for professional practice has important roles relating to the service of teaching and learning. These functions demonstrate the framework's influence to elevate professional conversations that characterize the interaction of exemplary teachers everywhere, regardless of community, building, and culture (Danielson, 2007). Within a differentiated supervision model, the administrator and teacher have individualized conversations relating to specific areas of teacher growth. For instance, instead of participating in a traditional observation cycle, a math teacher may choose to research and implement classroom strategies developed with the Math Design Collaborative, or a group of language arts teachers may choose to participate in a series of lesson studies in order to discuss, implement, observe, refine, and master a common lesson planned collaboratively with multiple activities designed by each team member.

Similarly, the evaluation system in Chile had components relating to differentiated supervision. The Chilean National Teacher Evaluation System, or NTES, was also expected to help the development of a professional career where teachers' experience and performance would be associated to monetary compensation and promotion opportunities (Taut, Santelices, Araya, and Manzi, 2010, p. 482). In this example, district leadership uses differentiated

supervision results in order to make promotions and compensation decisions, not solely for professional growth. Correspondingly, the inclusion of parent and student feedback and the teacher's contributions to the school community are considered on a yearly basis. The goal of these data points in the differentiated supervision evaluation process is to help determine what types of support or training the teacher needs, as well as what recognition and/or bonus structures might be applicable (Garrett, 2011).

Through a differentiated supervision model, teachers can feel supported to explore alternative methods to reach the level of a ‘master teacher.’ In the Los Angeles Unified School District, the district created and adopted a model known as Academic Growth Over Time (AGT). The AGT model also provides a way to keep top teachers energized and empowered, as well as a career path that does not require them to leave the classroom to be an administrator. In this model, teachers with a documented history of effective teaching can aspire to be model and mentor teachers who regularly coach and support their peers, both younger and older (Garrett, 2011). In the AGT model, district leaders developed a differentiated supervision model that led to every teacher being on an individualized and on-going professional development cycle, rather than merely an evaluation cycle, giving rise to a greater focus on professional growth in relation to student achievement.

## **2.2 THE PRIORITY NEEDS OF THE ADULT LEARNER**

Before exploring the changes relative to professional development protocols and policies since the passing of Act 82, it is important for districts to consider the needs of the adult learner.

For the purposes of this study, it is essential to explore these varied needs in order to help plan for effective types of professional development best meeting these needs.

Even though many policymakers and practitioners have spent a considerable amount of time and money on the processes of examining and reforming teacher evaluation and supervision models, such efforts cannot translate into beneficial learning experiences without considering an equal amount of emphasis on analyzing the priority needs of the adult learner. One of the keys to improving the adult learning experience is to acknowledge that adult learners have very different needs, expectations, and restrictions in what they want and need to know and how they are prepared to experience it (O'Toole & Essex, 2012). To examine these needs, one must come to understand the definition of “andragogy,” the needs of the self-directed learner, the importance of prior experiences and skills, the roadblocks in place that inhibit adult learners, the implementation of adult needs in the classroom setting, and the manner in which universities and workplace settings are adapting to these needs.

### **2.2.1 Self-Directed Learners**

Perhaps equally as important as the understanding that adults learn differently than children is the notion that adults are, by nature, self-directed learners. As people mature and progress through their lives, there are new needs that occur that help facilitate a continued quest for knowledge. Adult development involves continuous reevaluations and redefinitions of self, where learning is a continuous, lifelong experience. Learning in the formal education sense often reflects this understanding (Ansello, 1982). Furthermore, a main characteristic of adult learners is their “life-, mission-, or problem-centered route to learning. They want to see how

new knowledge can be applied to their life or what it could look like through an understanding or new knowledge lens” (Holyoke & Larson, 2009, p. 17). Whether it is to improve job performance, develop innovative ideas in the workplace, or handle family situations, adults explore new learning in manner that is more often self-driven than externally motivated in order to quench the thirst for additional learning experiences.

This personal context of learning is in stark contrast with the social context that we all remember of our K-12 educational model. Within this personal context, a learner can access instructional and peer contexts that permit formal and informal learning activities in order to foster knowledge and capabilities (Hermans et al., 2013). It is within this personal context and self-driven motivation that adults assume responsibility for their own learning. During this phase in life, the exterior factors formerly hindering learning begin to lose influence on the educational process, and adult learners become more self-directed and skills-based rather than focusing solely on grades (Ansello, 1982). This shift in focus from grades to competencies can help explain the importance of reflection on goals and practice, self-assessment of progress toward goals, and collaborative goal setting.

Although many new teacher evaluation and professional development models claim the cornerstone of the model is to satisfy adult learning needs, some experts fear that contemporary models are focused more on compliance than on professional growth and the self-directed needs of adult learners. For instance, in their examination of contemporary teacher evaluation methods and professional development models, Ponticell and Zepeda (2004) contend, “human beings are actively engaged in creating their world and their understandings of it” (p. 44). They believe newer paper-intensive models do not address this foundational need. For this reason, many

methods that have turned towards a model of compliance rather than professional growth are worrisome. These critics argue that:

if accountability-based evaluation systems continue to focus principals' and teachers' attention on complying with steps established by the law, and if fulfilling the steps continues to be more important than the process of adult learning required to improve teaching and learning, then there is little hope that supervision and evaluation will be perceived by teachers and principals as anything more than a perfunctory, compliance-centered process where both principals and teachers deliver the required show. (p. 54)

With this in mind, those charged with making decisions relative to contemporary models need an understanding that a certain level of commitment and conviction will be necessary for any type of sustainable change: adults must participate in the types of learning and examination of practice needed to change the quality of the teaching and learning experiences of both the children and the adults in schools (Ponticell & Zepeda, 2004). Schools and districts implementing these newer methods may examine the best practices of their peers from high-performing systems, nations, and other industries. Arguably, schools could examine models of personal and professional growth that align their values to their methods and their resources, providing an atmosphere that is truly conducive to the self-directed needs of adults.

In their analysis of systems that properly address the needs of adult learners, O'Toole and Essex (2012) paint a picture of organizations that place “great value on the role of learning and development, linking the planning process with systems and resources. The organization embraces the concepts of personal mastery, and a commitment to lifelong learning” (p. 189). In these companies and organizations, the adults constantly refine their craft because of a personal mission to continually improve, not because of fear for poor evaluations. In the higher

performing institutions, adults were seen as self-directed, where teachers were facilitators of the learning experience (O'Toole & Essex, 2012). Whether these new competencies were gathered through classes, workshops, or informal trainings, it is clear that adults have the desire and psychological need to continually improve their craft and personal knowledge base as they continue their journey through life.

### **2.2.2 Experience and Skill**

Adult learners have much to offer to the classroom setting through factors such as their preparation, participation, and wealth of life experiences (Gast, 2013; Wolvin, 1984). A quick look at effective adult learning environments reveals that instructors build activities and modules into their curriculum that explicitly address the need for adults to incorporate their past educational and real-world experiences into new learning situations. Similarly, adult learning is heavily influenced by the adult's education, experience, and judgment as well as their need to solve real-life problems as they encounter them on a daily basis (Ponticell & Zepeda, 2004). With this in mind, trainers and instructors may need to explore the value of discussions, simulations, case studies, and/or problem solving exercises into their lessons to best meet the needs of their adult learners. Such classroom experiences can best elicit the vast range of knowledge that the adults bring to the table.

These learning activities are equally important during on-the-job trainings because adult learners also like to see the value in what they are learning, whether it is useful for them on the job, at home, or in their personal lives (Gast, 2013). The days of workshops and trainings that contained sessions in which employees sat in a conference room or training room are transforming into interactive sessions where the adult learners are regularly discussing ideas and

questioning new theories. When trainers place workshops within or close to the workplace setting, “the learning experience can be coupled with the learner’s work role, heightening the likelihood that the learning transfers into practice and increasing the motivation and meaning which to attach to it” (O’Toole & Essex, 2012, p. 185). Ultimately, this strategy can only help accomplish the main objective of a training session for participants, which is to translate the new learning into his/her daily routine within the workplace or in their daily lives.

Perhaps of equal importance to this priority need of adult learners is the skillset necessary of leaders and trainers responsible for the professional development within the workplace or inside a classroom. Effective leadership skills are critical in managing a multi-generational workplace (Gast, 2013). Likewise, the trainer needs to recognize the impact of each learner’s input and seek regular feedback from everyone in the learning environment (Gast, 2013). This shift in philosophy has helped to create the types of learning environments many adults now encounter. Whether in an online or face-to-face environments, adults are demanding this type of constant interaction on a consistent basis from their instructions as a regular component of coursework or training modules. According to Wolvin (1984), leaders and trainers must “use the experiences of the learners and assume more the role of learning facilitators rather than that of directive teachers” (p. 268). Similar to the shifts that are now occurring in the classroom, educators of adult learners must now plan to be the “guide on the side, not the sage on the stage,” which constitutes a complete change in the mindset of adult education programs (Holter, 1972).

One area that cannot be ignored when planning training sessions or classroom lessons is the generational gaps that are present in every institution. When those responsible for the adult education program tackle the daunting task of planning out the objectives and learning activities for each lesson or session, they must also have the ability to understand these generational gaps,

as well as the skillset and characteristics of each generation in the classroom or session. Each of these generations brings with it a special set of characteristics that tend to influence learning preferences both in the classroom and on the job (Holyoke & Larson, 2009). For instance, an instructor must understand which technology tools to use during a training sessions to maximize the effectiveness of the training. One example of this is how the Millennia Generation feels completely at home when submitting work online and engaging in discussions through texts and online discussion boards, whereas those from the Baby Boomer Generation may not feel as comfortable and may view such activities as rude or disrespectful.

With this in mind, it is important for instructors responsible for these learning environments to understand the importance of creating networks within the classroom. When participants form these networks, either formally or informally, they have a means to continue the conversation after the formal training or lesson has ended. These new learning experiences with embedded networks have a greater probability of transforming practice when adults begin sharing the learning environment and acknowledging each other's strengths, as well as building continuing the conversation through whatever means necessary in their network (Wolf, 2009).

### **2.2.3 Needs in the Classroom and/or Training Environment**

Although adult learners attain new information at a higher rate when instructors tap into their vast range of skills, prior knowledge, and past experiences, there are other needs that must be met in a training or learning environment to best inspire adults to achieve their highest potential in any learning situation. For this to happen, it is important to understand that adult education occurs in a variety of formats. Adult education comes in the forms of technical, remedial, liberal, and religious studies, taking place in assorted settings that include, but are not

limited to, the workplace, libraries, community centers, high schools, community colleges, universities, prisons, and health facilities (Dobmeier & Moran, 2008). With this vast range of educational experiences in mind, it is essential to identify and understand the spectrum of individualized needs that occurs in each of these settings.

According to Scanlon and Schmitz (2001), “current adult learning theorists suggest that educators are responsible for the planning of adult education programs. Therefore, educators have an ethical responsibility to keep the well-being of clients/students in mind while meeting the learning requirements of organizations/institutions” (p. 91). One of the ways educators must prepare for the wellbeing of their adult learners is to recognize the different needs and levels of training needed within a lesson or training session. It is important for those responsible for planning and conducting lessons or workshops to avoid the common pitfall that occurs when an employer offers only one level of training and puts all employees in the same training session. This is an extremely efficient solution, but is not effective since each level requires a different set of knowledge and skills. When employees who are at the mastery level are mixed with those who need basic-level awareness training, they soon become bored and may distract other learners, leading to a less-than-ideal learning environment (Merli, 2011). With this in mind, many institutions and companies are implementing sessions that allow for personal reflection and choice within a common workshop framework.

Coincidentally, employers and adult educators may offer opportunities for adults to apply self-direction in the identification of personal goals, selection of learning strategies, and types of assessment (Ross-Gordon, 2003). This type of classroom environment aligns with an adult learner’s fundamental need relating to self-direction and life-long learning. This philosophical shift in adult education mirrors the emphasis on differentiated instruction for the younger learner

enrolled in elementary, middle, and high schools nationwide. The cornerstone of this model is choice, where Human Resource development professionals, or other staff members in charge of Human Resource development responsibilities, develop courses and learning experiences involving various participant choices that are thoroughly designed, developed, implemented, and evaluated with the end-user in mind (Scanlon & Schmitz, 2001).

Although the evaluation component of any training or lesson is often overlooked, it is essential for a number of reasons. The function of evaluating training programs helps the trainer to justify the training budget to superiors, quantify performance improvement and improve the effectiveness of all aspects of the training program (Merlo, 2011). How can adult educators or employers truly know the value of their trainings or lessons without assessing the effectiveness of the target audience? O'Toole and Essex (2012) assert, “workplace-based, adult education tends to be evaluated at micro-levels (i.e. after each module, session, one-day course, etc.) via a “happy sheet” or “reactionnaire” (p. 186). Perhaps the expectations that those responsible for the trainings and the actual expectations of the participants do not align, leading to disgruntled students and/or employees and wasted opportunities. Without listening to the opinions of these participants, adult educators are missing a vital opportunity to understand the perspective of the learner. Unlike their younger counterparts, adults have far less tolerance for bad classroom instruction and for poorly constructed training experiences, regardless of setting, time, length, or location (O'Toole & Essex, 2012). This reality can be observed outside any classroom or workshop setting as participants leave a session that is less than satisfactory and/or relevant. When this occurs, the likelihood of the lesson or training to have the desired impact is significantly decreased and future educational opportunities will be less likely to be successful and well attended.

To address these deficiencies, the teacher/trainer needs to discover factors that motivate each individual (Holyoke & Larson, 2009). Unfortunately, most adult education environments have mirrored some of the classroom settings of the past decades of public education, where students are passive observers of a lesson, not active participants of the learning. It is an inescapable truth that workplace-based, adult education is dominated by the use of PowerPoint presentations (O'Toole & Essex, 2012). Cekada (2012) contends:

Trainers must understand what learning activities are most engaging for learners today. With younger generations, it is not the technology that makes the learning engaging, but the learning activity itself. The youngest generation likes to learn through discovery and experiences, so a lecture-type environment may not be the most effective. However, team projects or an opportunity to share experiences with peers and build from that knowledge base, may enhance their learning. (p. 43)

When instructors ensure that activities like these occur in the adult education setting, the mindset of the entire educational environment shifts. In these settings, the instructor is just as concerned about the activities that will address the content as they are about learning target for the lesson or workshop. Such methods have led to the increasing evolution of the presenter/facilitator as distinct from the teacher/educator" (O'Toole & Essex, 2012). These types of instructors facilitate the transmission of new knowledge and experiences aimed at creating profound revelations in the classroom or training session. In engaging environments, adults tend to be active participants, which leads to a more powerful learning experience.

Within these collaborative environments, communication skills are of paramount importance for the teacher or trainer. For instance, trainers need to be aware of non-verbal communication, such as body language. Body language is an amplifier of an individual's

feelings. Learners with a tight jaw and mouth will struggle to learn and retain information since an increased tension reduces retention (Merli, 2011). When instructors notice these types of warning signs in a session or classroom, they entire class would benefit from a learning activity that creates a sense of comfort and trust. If the trainer continues the lesson without adapting, not only does that individual lose focus and attention, the probability for others to follow suit may increase. For this to occur, it is important for the trainer to remember to keep the flow of non-verbal communication open by maintaining eye contact throughout each learning activity. A trainer's ability to decode non-verbal communication helps the trainer to discern and diffuse hostility in learners (Merli, 2011).

Simple strategies, such as short breaks every hour, can help instructors regain the focus in the session or classroom and allow everyone to refresh and regroup for the next activity. Additionally, trainers must ensure that the materials and handouts included in each lesson are prepared in a manner that will allow each participant to understand. For technical and practical communications, it is recommended that materials be written at the sixth grade level, where 60% of learners can understand them (Merli, 2011). Trainings and lessons that have print material in which the majority of the class cannot comprehend due to the technical nature of the readings lead to missed opportunities for learning and frustrated sets of adult learners.

Perhaps one area that trainers overlook is the social function that adult learning encompasses. Adults learn best when trainers understand this social need and use it to their advantage when creating lessons or workshops. Educational settings such as public education, and corporate-sponsored trainings are social activities. Many educators believe that for quality continued learning, more is better than less and education enhances both individuals and society as a whole (Scanlon & Schmitz, 2001). Within this social function, teachers and trainers must

understand the importance communication has within the adult learning environment. For instructors to create the optimal learning environment for adult learners, they must be proficient at every communication skill, including speaking, listening, writing, and reading, within a variety of platforms (face-to-face, over the phone, computer-based, etc.). Communication and other soft skills are important to the effective functioning of adults in social and career settings, and most adults have come to recognize the significance of these skills (Wolvin, 1984). Additionally, an instructor's ability to model these skills can have lasting effects outside of the classroom, leading to advances both work situations and personal situations. Similarly, adults today are placing increased emphasis on communication skills for a myriad of reasons, such as effective family relations, dealing with intergenerational issues, and listening enjoyment of leisure activities (Wolvin, 1984). Perhaps the most important communication skill a trainer can possess is the ability to sell the content, or the subject, of the training. For instance, many adults ask the question "Why do I need to learn about this?" when walking into a training or classroom. Without this basic skill, a trainer may have the best lesson planned, but the outcomes will not be achieved because the adults will not be fully invested in value of the training. This is particularly evident "when teaching these learners about new technology because they are typically resistant to strong technological change. A trainer must help learners recognize the need to know this new information or new technology and the value that it provides" (Cekada, 2012, p. 42). Within the social context, trainers must understand adults' need for communicating the value of new learning and how it can immediately transform the students' lives.

Unfortunately, formal adult education sessions do not occur as regularly as many adults prefer. Primarily, workplace learning experiences often occur in short bursts according to needs and costs (O'Toole & Essex, 2012). School calendars and teacher contracts nationwide support

this claim as many districts only plan for a handful of professional development days throughout a normal academic year. However, more and more adults are turning to non-traditional methods to accommodate their need for life-long learning. Instead of sessions that take place in a classroom setting, adults are looking to the workplace as an educational setting via mentoring, coaching, shadowing, and buddying programs (O'Toole & Essex, 2012). Adults are now turning to 21<sup>st</sup> century outlets, such as Twitter, Facebook, and Pinterest to help facilitate their need for furthering learning, sharing ideas, and fostering creativity. To help facilitate this learning process in a training or classroom environment, trainers/educators must

provide flexibility with respect to learning methods. Incorporate small group discussions and teamwork into sessions, as these learners appreciate responsiveness and getting ideas from others. [Respect learners who] also are more comfortable with technology than previous generations, so they are comfortable in an environment that utilizes technology such as the Internet and multimedia. (Cekada, 2012, p. 43)

When these methods become commonplace in institutions and in the lives of the employees and/or adult learners, these types of methods broaden the adult learning context, taking place beyond the confines of the typical classroom (O'Toole & Essex, 2012). After this occurs, life-long learning is more likely to follow.

## **2.3 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES THAT BEST MEET THE NEEDS OF THE ADULT LEARNER**

It is important for districts to consider several professional development types given the various needs of the adult learner described earlier. For the purposes of this study, it is essential

to explore the types of professional development that best meet the various needs of the adult learning in order to identify the practices that are currently in place at successful school districts.

Many districts have explored or implemented models of professional development that offer a variety of choice-based workshops which teacher can participate. For instance, teachers may choose four workshops out of sixteen offered during the course of the day, based on their interests and needs. Although “it is generally accepted that intensive, sustained, job-embedded professional development focused on the content of the subject that teachers teach is more likely to improve teacher knowledge, classroom instruction, and student achievement” (Wayne, 2008, p. 470), it is equally important to match teachers with workshops that meet their individualized needs in terms of instructional techniques. These job-embedded workshops, stratified by content or instructional technique, allow the adult learner to choose areas of professional development most appropriate to their needs. According to this model, innovations reflect increasing collaboration among administrators, teachers, and local unions, where most of the alternatives apply only to experienced teachers. This suggests that continuous professional development should be differentiated for novices and experienced teachers (Collinson, Kozina, Lin, Ling, Matheson, Newcombe, & Zogla, 2009). Not only does this model provide teachers the opportunity to choose professional development topics determined by a committee of teachers and school administrators that best meet their needs, it provides them an opportunity to collaborate with other professionals as they search for the best practices of implementation.

Arguably, a component of professional development should relate to weaknesses identified through the evaluation and supervision process. For these types of professional development opportunities to succeed and meet the goal of improving instructional practices, not only is it important to examine the relationships between principals (or supervisors) and teachers,

it is equally important to explore and identify the menu of professional development opportunities available to address specific weaknesses. “A good relationship between the school leader and the individual teacher is necessary for the teacher to be receptive to the knowledge and support of the school leader. Hence, we conclude that a combination of the three leadership variables as perceived by the teacher is of utmost importance for teacher evaluation” (Tuttyens, 2011, p. 897).

With this in mind, it is important for principals and supervisors to develop meaningful relationships with their teaching staff in order to elicit the change that best leads to improvement in instructional techniques. The culture of “healthy tension” that exists between teachers and principals may need to change to a culture of “healthy collaboration” geared to address the needs of the students in the building. As part of the post-observation conference, some evaluation models, such as Charlotte Danielson’s *Framework for Teaching*, require both the teacher and evaluator to identify areas of weakness and develop a plan to address those areas (Danielson, 2007). This type of professional development can be more effective and more efficient if supervisors link specific teachers’ weaknesses with the learning opportunities most likely to remedy those weaknesses and bring about greater student learning experiences in the classroom (Hill, 2009). At the post-conference, evaluators and teachers collaboratively agree upon the weaknesses and discuss targeted plans for improvement. In this model, teachers scoring below benchmarks in math knowledge would be required to attend math-focused coursework. Or, teachers who fail over several years to perfect classroom management routines would be paired with others who are experts in this component of teaching (Hill, 2009). This collaborative effort between teachers and evaluators highlights the importance of healthy relationship between the two professionals.

### **2.3.1 Differentiated Learning**

Much like the movements to differentiate both instruction and supervision, there is also a movement to differentiate learning available to professionals. In years past, the typical learning environment was a one-size-fits-all program that offered one type of instructional objective using one type of instructional method at one level of mastery (Hill, 2009; Lumpe, 2007). These types of learning experiences are now transitioning to more of a differentiated manner, where professionals have the opportunity to choose topics, methods, and/or mastery levels. In other models, the supervisors help to choose these sessions based on data gathered from the observation and evaluation processes.

The main strategy is to have available professional education incentives, models, and norms with what we wish to see teachers do. Although there is a strong utopian ideal surrounding teacher learning, that every teacher is a "continual learner" striving to better herself for the good of students, the reality is that teachers, like other professionals, respond to the incentives, norms, and models that surround them. This suggests that states and districts reconsider professional development requirements that ask only for a certain number of hours within a certain time span and establish incentives for deeper investment- or even criteria based on student learning. (Hill, 2009, p. 474)

In a differentiated learning model, some approaches to professional development experiences may be designed to improve teachers' skills in implementing a highly specified set of instructional practices, while other opportunities may be designed to strengthen teachers' content knowledge, with desired changes in practice less clearly articulated. Likewise, there may be professional development opportunities that are designed to produce changes in narrowly defined aspects of student achievement, whereas other sessions may be designed to produce

large-scale changes in achievement (Wayne et al., 2008; Dentzau, 2013). With these examples in mind, it is clear that professional development aimed at providing specific improvements of a teacher's practice can be more effective and more efficient than in the past, especially if we link specific teachers' weaknesses with the learning opportunities most likely to remedy those identified areas of growth. For instance, teachers scoring below a baseline of understanding as to how to teach an author's purpose would be required to attend language arts-focused coursework. Similarly, teachers who are not competent in managing classroom procedures, inquiry-based learning, or deeper questioning techniques would be paired with others who are expert in these techniques. For these systems of professional development to exist, supervisors must use a much more detailed system of teacher evaluation than the models of the past (Hill, 2009).

Teachers have a vast array of experience levels, further warranting district differentiation in professional development provision. Districts employ teachers who have a spectrum of experience, from months to decades, and often place both sets of teachers in the same professional development setting. Depending on the topic, sessions where novice learners may benefit from being paired with experienced learners may be most effective. Beginners may draw upon veterans' vast experiences in the classroom setting, while veterans' may learn from new teachers who are energetically fresh from their professional formation programs, providing a reciprocal learning environment. Likewise, it is also important to understand that there may be topics best offered in sessions where homogeneous grouping would be a more effective strategy (Roseler, 2013).

These types of professional development innovations reflect an increasing level of understanding, trust, and collaboration among administrators, teachers, and local unions. In these models, targeted professional growth is the focus; not learning for learning's sake. With

this in mind, it is important that differentiated professional development opportunities are offered for the entire teaching staff, regardless of experience level (Collinson, 2009). An even stronger model of differentiation is evident when teachers play a role in supporting other teachers. In this type of model, teachers themselves target specific improvements in their own practices, seeking out learning opportunities that would serve themselves and the students they teach. In this type of model, teachers take ownership of their own improvement and growth, leading to a more sustainable system of professional development (Roseler, 2013).

Yet another reason for districts to transition to more of differentiated model is the fact that many teachers must choose from either research-based courses at the graduate school level, or the broad variety of workshops offered at intermediate units, regional school districts, or convention centers. Both kinds of offerings limit the purpose of professional development, which is individualized professional growth. Even worse, most teachers taking advantage of this type of professional development session do so on a voluntary basis, and teachers who volunteer to participate may differ in motivation or prior knowledge and instructional practice from teachers who do not (Wayne, 2008).

Such offerings are planned for the masses, not individual teachers looking to improve upon specific skills in their repertoire. At these sessions, most teachers receive uninspired and often lower-quality professional development and related learning opportunities, leading to lower correlation of improved practices in the classroom (Hill, 2009). In these sessions, teachers are placed in settings similar to a college lecture, where an expert speaks to the large group. In this environment, the teachers typically sit passively, thinking about how this session could impact their classrooms. Unfortunately, these sessions do not take advantage of the most important element available in the room, the teachers themselves. Without the discussion of experiences,

sharing of best practices, and opportunities for relevant questions, most teachers reported that professional development of this manner reinforced their existing practices, and a minority reported no effect at all (Hill, 2009).

Perhaps another wrinkle in the realm of differentiated professional development models is the notion relating to the neuroscience behind such offerings. Often, teachers participate in workshops or courses that do plenty of explaining about how to plan hands-on lessons and activities, but they seldom actively participate by creating hands-on lesson plans. In this type of differentiated professional development setting, the goal of bringing the neuroscience of learning to teachers provides a unique perspective on instruction. Teachers are provided with a setting where they see themselves as designers of experiences that ultimately change students' brains and their understanding of the content. This understanding of the science behind learning, where synapses change and neural circuits develop and strengthen with experiences such as practice and play, and formal and informal learning, may be important for anyone assuming an instructive role (Dubinsky, Roehrig, & Varma, 2013). These types of differentiated professional development experiences are rare for all teachers searching for concrete examples of how hands-on activities can benefit students and learning on a daily basis. The inquiry lessons and experiments provided in this type professional development setting serves as an authentic learning experience for teachers, which allows teachers to experience the role of learner in an inquiry setting. In its simplest form, the topic of neuroscience is a mindset change for many teachers, providing the experience of learning through doing. Such a setting provides a constructivist approach to visualizing how students could meaningfully experience learning in this same manner (Dubinsky, Roehrig, & Varma, 2013). Equally important is the on-going discussion and collaboration between teachers that occurs after the professional development

sessions, where teachers observe each other planning and implementing inquiry-based activities that provide others with easily replicable examples.

### **2.3.2 Teacher Research as Professional Development**

As differentiated supervision models are increasing in popularity, so are their individual components. One of the components that aligns with the needs of the adult learner is the function of teacher research as a model of professional development. In this type of professional development model, teachers choose the topic that would best benefit their own professional needs and the needs of their students, researching the subject with the goal of providing a report or presentation about the research itself and the effect the research has had on the specific professional context. Through this professional development model, it is important for individual teachers to revisit how they learn best. This notion of learning about learning, or learning how to learn, asks teachers to explore metacognitive principles, a stark contrast to the constant focus of content and standards that many teachers have.

Much like any professional development model, teachers need convincing reasons to dramatically change their skillsets and practices (Schrum, 1999). Once this revelation occurs and teachers understand the needs and benefits of the research, true learning and research can take place. In its simplest form, when teachers begin the research process, they first must acknowledge the importance of learning, learning how to learn, and transforming their knowledge into practice for the benefit of their students' growth. "Teacher professional learning is a complex process, which requires cognitive and emotional involvement of teachers individually and collectively, the capacity and willingness to examine where each one stands in terms of convictions" (Avalos, 2011, p. 10). With this in mind, each teacher's journey through

this process, which requires exploration and evaluation of research and strategies, is a vastly different professional development path than merely sitting through a two-hour speaker session on an educational topic. Not only would the outcomes of the professional development inherently be different, the level of ownership would be dramatically higher for those teachers who have performed an action research project.

Just as classroom teachers increase depth of knowledge when students transition from basic knowledge activities to activities centered around synthesizing and analyzing information, so too in professional development for adult educators, the level of learning increases as rigor increases. For instance, instead of attending a professional development session on grouping strategies for Algebra classes, a research project revolving around the benefits and drawbacks of grouping strategies in one Algebra classroom goes beyond the mere acquisition of instructional strategies and techniques and includes a deeper understanding of how students develop insights into algebraic concepts (Van Driel & Berry, 2012). This deeper level of understanding becomes increasingly individualized to teachers as they interact with the research and consider their own sets of experiences, beliefs, and ideas. Thus, this component of teacher research can better address the deficits of prevailing professional development models that fail to acknowledge the differences of each teacher and insist on providing a homogeneous experience to every participant (Taylor, Yates, Meyer, & Kinsella, 2011).

Perhaps another benefit of teacher research is the mentoring component associated with most research projects. Similar to learner-mentor relationship in a college setting, teachers often pair up with mentors as they progress through their individual journeys in this professional development model. In many instances, mentors and researchers work symbiotically to target the needs of the research, often meeting face-to-face, online, or in the classroom. This type of

professional relationship, sometimes carried out between public K-12 schools and post-secondary schools, often provides benefits to both parties, specifically when teachers request specific interactions within the classroom to address the research components that immediately affect the classroom setting (Taylor et al., 2011). Within these types of requests, post-secondary professionals get some much-needed time in the public school setting, and the researcher-teachers get the equally important, objective feedback that is individualized to their own classroom. When such relationships are forged, developed, and found to be successful, the word spreads. Not only do others examine the relevance in a relationship produced from this type of professional development model, they begin to explore the data that was produced, reflect on the meaning of the results, and reflect on their own instructional strategies and the refinement of their own teaching, looking at the initial researcher as a teacher leader in the wider realm of professionalism and advocacy (Avalos, 2011; Tayler et al., 2011).

### **2.3.3 Continuous Professional Development Models**

When examining the variety of professional development models, and specifically models drawing upon teacher efficacy, differentiated professional development models, models centered around technology, and teacher research models, leaders must also address the need to offer continuous professional development in each of these models in order to continually affect professional growth. Whether the professional development is standardized (for example, an approach involving a large-group setting with a dissemination of skills) or purposeful (for example, an approach aimed at long-term individualized improvements in instruction), little to no improvements are made if the professional development is not held on an on-going basis (Jovanova-Mitkovska, 2010). Thus, professional development opportunities may work better if

they occur on an on-going basis, with a clear set of expectations, goals, and deadlines for implementation. For instance, when teachers choose to participate in an action research project, successful models incorporate a linear path that has specific criteria for the project, deadlines to adhere to, and products that accompany the research. For those involved in professional development centered around technology, teachers must place an emphasis on their goals and selecting activities that will enable the realization of set goals.

With the increased emphasis on accountability and productivity by members of governmental agencies, media outlets, and advocacy groups, the purpose of continuous professional development may begin to be measured in terms of increased effectiveness in delivering specified learning outcomes for students in classrooms, rather than the intrinsic enhancement of professional knowledge and progression of professional growth (Kirkwood & Christie, 2006). However, it is important to understand the continuous professional development models not only stretch across weeks and months, but across the many years of a teacher's career. When teachers begin their careers, they embark on a journey of learning. Primarily, this continuous process has specific components that occur on a yearly basis and it is accomplished in numerous ways. The life span of a continuous professional development model can stretch across many topics, from new knowledge, skills, strategies in the respective areas of competence and application of appropriate technology, to influencing teacher beliefs and practices, to affecting student learning outcomes and the implementation of educational reform, to establishing and strengthening teamwork and cooperation in the classroom (Jovanova-Mitkovska, 2010). Perhaps the evidence of change in relation to teaching methods, strategies, and the learning process can show the efficiency of each individual professional development opportunity, as well as the effectiveness of the collective, continuous processes.

Successful models of continuous professional development come in many shapes and sizes but no matter what the format, they have several distinct components in common with one another. In these models, professional enquiry does not occur in isolation. Teachers work together to identify targeted areas of growth and investigate practices that can lead to significant improvements in their individual and collective practices. These models offer more than just one-stop trainings, workshops, seminars, observations, and performances of activities by teachers. Conversely, successful continuous professional development models set teachers not only in the role of trained, who are placed in this long process, but in the role of future trainers charged with leading other teachers to use new methods, techniques, and approaches in their practice, all with the potential of providing the teacher leaders with a renewed enthusiasm and confidence (Jovanova-Mitkovska, 2010; Kirkwood & Christie, 2006).

## **2.4 CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH**

In order to understand the need for Section 1123 of Act 82, it is important to understand the different types of teacher evaluation and supervision methods that have varied across districts. It is also essential to understand the differences in policies and protocols relating to teacher evaluation and supervision, which are contributing factors to the development of a unified model of evaluation and supervision. Equally relevant to this study is examination of the needs of the adult learner. With this knowledge in hand, districts can better design professional development opportunities to meet educator needs and provide an optimal environment for the professional development to affect instructional practices and student achievement.

For the purposes of this study, this background knowledge is essential in understanding

the history and framing the survey questions for both the administrator and teacher survey instruments. To identify possible patterns of policy implementation amongst successful school districts in Southwestern Pennsylvania, understanding the needs of the adult learner and how districts are sensitive to these needs when preparing and implementing professional development planning is paramount. However, one of the key themes of this study is change. In the following sections, I will examine the importance of change to my study and explain how I will identify possible patterns of how successful districts have adapted since the implementation of Act 82.

## **3.0 METHODOLOGY**

In this study regarding how administrators and union presidents of selected school districts in Southwestern Pennsylvania reported changes in their district as they adapted to the mandates that Act 82 requires of districts, the scope of this study and its relevance to the teaching profession were carefully considered. Paramount was the goal of identifying the districts that appeared to have the supports and protocols in place to effectively manage the mandates of the legislation and likewise, transformed those supports into enhancements to teaching methodologies and practices through professional development focused on the needs of the adult learner.

### **3.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this study was to examine how Act 82 has changed the way that selected districts supervise and evaluate teachers. It was specifically an exploration of how legislation has changed the frequency of supervision, the protocols relating to supervision (pre-observation and post-observation meetings, examining teacher evidence, including teacher reflections in documentation), the professional language that administrators and teachers use during the observation and supervision cycle, and the resources and supports that administrators use as part of the accountability component of the observation cycle. This was a study completely situated

in practice to identify protocols and policies in place in select Southwestern Pennsylvania school districts in order to share these practices and patterns that may help other districts implement similar protocols and policies. A key component in this study was the amount of change that has occurred in these practices across the districts. Furthermore, an examination of practices relating to mandated professional development as a result of the contemporary evaluation and supervision models was included. In order to plan for targeted professional development workshops aimed at increasing the capacity of the teaching staff in relation to the rubrics defined in Act 82, districts were using data gathered from evaluation and supervision models. For instance, districts may utilize software packages that track specific trends in a building, such as higher-level questioning, in order to provide data that justifies specific workshops for professional development seminars. Districts may also provide differentiated professional development opportunities based on observed behaviors and areas of improvement.

### **3.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

#### **3.2.1 Statement of the Problem**

Southwestern Pennsylvania provided the context for the study. Models that relate professional development opportunities to results of the evaluation and supervision processes were of particular emphasis in this research. This approach examined and identified multiple practitioner perspectives relative to Act 82. This study explored three primary questions aimed at soliciting responses from building-level and central office-level administrators, and union presidents. The key was to identify the methods of implementation in order to highlight how

educators report changes in professional development models as a result of the implementation of Act 82.

### **3.2.2 Study Questions Disciplinary Base**

The perceptions of administrators and union presidents relative to the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Teacher Effectiveness Model were explored in the study. The disciplinary base of this research lied within educational leadership, professional development, and social behavior. Wayne, Yoon, Zhu, Cronen, & Garet (2008) believe, "much PD is voluntary, and teachers who volunteer to participate may differ in motivation or prior knowledge and instructional practice from teachers who do not" (p. 471). The survey data collected relating to the first research question correlated to functions carried out by those in administrative and supervisory roles and school administrators. Building level administrators and central office administrators grapple with leading the entire staff into a new system of evaluations and supervisory processes. The survey questions that related to the second and third research questions aligned within the disciplinary base of professional development, searching for the best practices of implementation and correlation to improved teacher effectiveness. Finally, the survey questions that related to the third research question were situated within the social behavior disciplinary base because of the psychology behind mandates to improve through evaluation and supervision processes. The goal was to reconcile key findings of the literature review to the results of practitioner-based research in local schools to determine professional development effectiveness.

Professional development will be more effective and more efficient if we link specific teachers' weaknesses with the learning opportunities most likely to remedy those

weaknesses. For instance, teachers scoring below a cutoff in math knowledge would be required to attend math-focused coursework. Or, teachers who fail over several years to perfect classroom management routines would be paired with others who are expert in this arena. This entails a much more nuanced and intrusive system of teacher evaluation than we now have. (Hill, 2009, p. 475)

With this in mind, the study examined how districts are currently using evaluation and supervision data to inform professional development decisions and offerings, with an attempt to elicit information on how administrators and union presidents would like to change the current systems of professional development.

### **3.3 RESEARCH METHODS AND DESIGN**

#### **3.3.1 Population and Sample**

In order to perform a study relevant to both the field of public education and my employer, the Belle Vernon Area School District, this study focused on selected school districts of similar enrollment size, per-pupil expenditures, and per-student cost. The Belle Vernon Area School District is a suburban school district located southeast of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The district spans two counties, Fayette and Westmoreland, and enrolls approximately 2,600 students in an area of 42.2 square miles. For the purposes of this study, I defined selected school districts as the districts that are in the top quartile, or 25%, of the 2015 *Pittsburgh Business Times*' Guide to Western Pennsylvania Schools. To identify the school districts that fit within this focus, I used three resources: the *Pittsburgh Business Times* to identify the rankings used to determine

the school districts that are within the top quartile, the School Performance Profile and the National Center for Education Statistics Elementary and Secondary Information System, <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/elsi/>, provided the most recent data in order to determine each school district's enrollment and financial information.

Specifically, the 2015 *Pittsburgh Business Times'* Guide to Western Pennsylvania Schools ranked 105 school districts. The top quartile included the top 26 schools. However, these schools were of varying size in terms of enrollment and per-pupil expenditures. In order to identify schools of similar enrollment size to Belle Vernon Area School District, I ranked each district in terms of enrollment values that were included with the 2014-2015 School Performance Profile. I then divided this set of schools into categories of equal size. The first category consisted of school districts with enrollment of fewer than 1,600 students, the second category consisted of schools with enrollments between 1,600 and 3,100 students, and the third category consisted of schools with enrollments greater than 3,100 students. Similarly, in order to identify schools with similar per-pupil expenditures, I ranked each district based on their per-pupil expenditure and separated the list into three categories. The first category consisted of school districts with per-pupil expenditures less than \$13,500, the second category consisted of schools with per-pupil expenditures between \$13,500 and \$15,500, and the third the category consisted of schools with per-pupil expenditures greater than \$15,500. For the purposes of this study, the Belle Vernon Area School District fell into the second category in terms of student enrollment and the first category for per-pupil expenditures.

After ranking and identifying school districts utilizing the processes explained above, I compiled a list of schools and identified participants for the surveys. This list consisted of the following districts: Beaver Area, Canon-McMillan, Franklin Regional, Freeport Area, Greater

Latrobe, Hampton, Kiski Area, Mars Area, Montour, Norwin, Penn-Trafford, Peters Township, Quaker Valley, Seneca Valley, South Fayette, and West Jefferson Hills. I compared the perception of topics relating to Act 82 of 2012 between schools with mandated professional development programs based on evaluation results and those without. By comparing these perception data, I determined the similarities or differences between school administrators and union presidents.

### **3.3.2 Selection Process for Comparison Districts**

In order to identify school districts that are similar to the Belle Vernon Area School District, it was necessary to determine the characteristics of the selected school districts that would best match the Belle Vernon Area School District. For instance, some comparisons of districts looked at size as a determining factor. Others compared districts based upon the amount of total expenditures, the socioeconomic status, the racial diversity, the educational attainment status of parents/guardians, the percent of single-parent households, or the student-teacher ratio. When I examined specific characteristics of the schools that were deemed successful by the 2015 *Pittsburgh Business Times'* Guide to Western Pennsylvania Schools, I noticed there were few characteristics that I could draw upon in order to select districts similar to the Belle Vernon Area School District. In this case, student enrollment and per-pupil expenditures were the two characteristics I used in order to identify appropriate districts for a comparison study.

The participants targeted for this study were union presidents, building level administrators, and central office administrators from Southwestern Pennsylvania who were certified to teach in the Commonwealth by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and who were employees of a public school district. The selected educators had a variety of experience

levels and building level assignments. All of the participants were employees of districts in the top quartile of the 2015 *Pittsburgh Business Times* Guide to Southwestern Pennsylvania Schools. The districts selected were of similar enrollment size and per-pupil expenditure status as the Belle Vernon Area School District.

### **3.4 PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT**

A selection process that identified participants who are employees of districts in the top quartile of the 2015 *Pittsburgh Business Times* Guide to Southwestern Pennsylvania Schools was utilized. After the schools were identified for the purposes of this study, I sent an email describing the research and seeking support from the superintendent of each school district identified. Within this email requesting support, I included the set of questions posed to the district's leadership team and teachers, as well as the importance of the research to the district. Only those districts that responded with concerns about the study would not be included in the recruitment scripts for the surveys.

Once the superintendent's support was elicited, I then sent an email link to the survey to leadership teams (building level administrators and central office administrators) and union presidents in each of the identified school districts. Every email of every central office administrator, building level administrator, and union president in the districts identified through the selection process was collected. The survey instruments used in this study appear in Appendices D and E. Efforts were made over a three-week span in order to garner the highest return rate from the schools selected for inclusion in the study. At the conclusion of the research, handwritten thank you notes to the superintendents of each of the districts selected for this

survey were sent to thank educators for their help and participation, utilizing this functionality of Qualtrics, a University of Pittsburgh survey and research analysis tool.

### **3.5 PILOT SURVEY**

A pilot survey was first sent to a set of administrators and select teachers in Westmoreland County, the county in which the Belle Vernon Area School District is located, in order to gain feedback relative to the design of the survey and the wording of the questions contained in the survey. Westmoreland County is located southeast of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in Southwestern Pennsylvania and it is the second-largest county (in terms of population) in the region. I identified the pilot survey participants by selecting peers and colleagues from my previous three districts of employment, as well as selecting colleagues I met through meetings, conferences, and classes over the past 13 years in the profession. I sent the pilot study out to 35 different administrators in seven different school districts located in Westmoreland County, of which 16 participants, or 45%, completed the survey and provided feedback. The majority of the feedback pertained to some type of grammatical mistake (punctuation or capitalization) or confusion surrounding answer choices.

I also required each pilot survey participant to report how long it took him or her to complete the survey. I did this in order to be cognizant of a professional's time. My rationale behind this is that the less amount of time the participant perceives the survey will take to complete, the higher the participation rate might be.

### **3.6 RESPONSE RATES AND DEMOGRAPHICS**

The participants of this study were administrators and union presidents of selected districts in Southwestern Pennsylvania. Their input for this study was necessary in order to gain both administrative perspective and the perspective of union leaders, who hear how the implementation of Act 82 of 2012 has affected the classroom teachers in each of these districts. Although each school district in Southwestern Pennsylvania only had one union president, these districts had a number of administrators, and each district had different types of administrators, both central office administrators and building level administrators, with the responsibility of supervising and evaluating professional staff members.

#### **3.6.1 Response Rates**

Participants of the study were all employees of districts in the top quartile of the 2015 *Pittsburgh Business Times* Guide to Southwestern Pennsylvania Schools. Once school districts were identified and the superintendents were contacted in order to elicit any concerns or questions, I continued with the process of contacting survey participants that were administrators or union presidents. Of the 16 school districts identified for this study, only 1 district, Norwin, declined to participate due to the fact that the district had not fully implemented the Educator Effectiveness Model due to a collective bargaining agreement requirement. Four other districts' superintendents (Canon-McMillan, Franklin Regional, Quaker Valley, and Seneca Valley) responded with emails of support, whereas the other 11 did not respond to my initial request with any concerns about the study. I specifically asked for district expertise and input into a potential knowledge base that could be shared with each of the participating districts. Once I received the

support of the superintendent, another email and a link to the survey was sent to leadership teams (building level administrators and central office administrators) and union presidents in each of the identified school districts. For three weeks, efforts were made to garner the highest return rate from the schools selected for inclusion in this survey.

At the conclusion of the third week of data collection, I closed the surveys in order to begin my analysis of the data. Of the 135 administrators who were employed in the selected districts in Southwestern Pennsylvania, 44% of those administrators completed the survey for this study. Additionally, of the 15 union presidents from the selected districts, 33% completed the survey. Overall, 69 participants completed a survey of the 150 possible participants that were emailed a survey link, amounting to an overall response rate of 43%. The response rates for this study are outlined below in Table 1. While the response rate for the entire survey was 43%, not every participant submitted an answer for each question; therefore, the response values varied for each question.

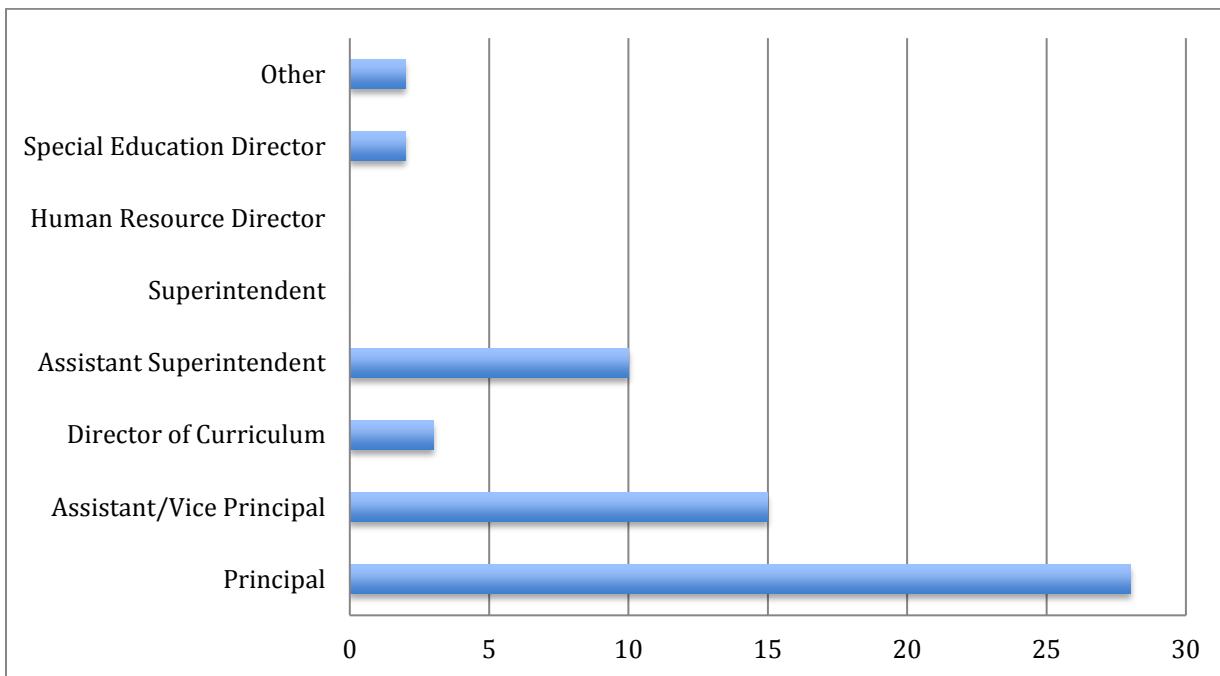
Participant Group	Number of Surveys Completed	Number of Emails Sent Through Qualtrics	Response Rate
Administrators	60	135	44%
Union Presidents	5	15	33%
Total	65	150	43%

**Table 1 - Survey Response Rates**

### **3.6.2 Characteristics of Participants – Administrators**

The beginning section of the Act 82 survey that was sent to all administrators contained

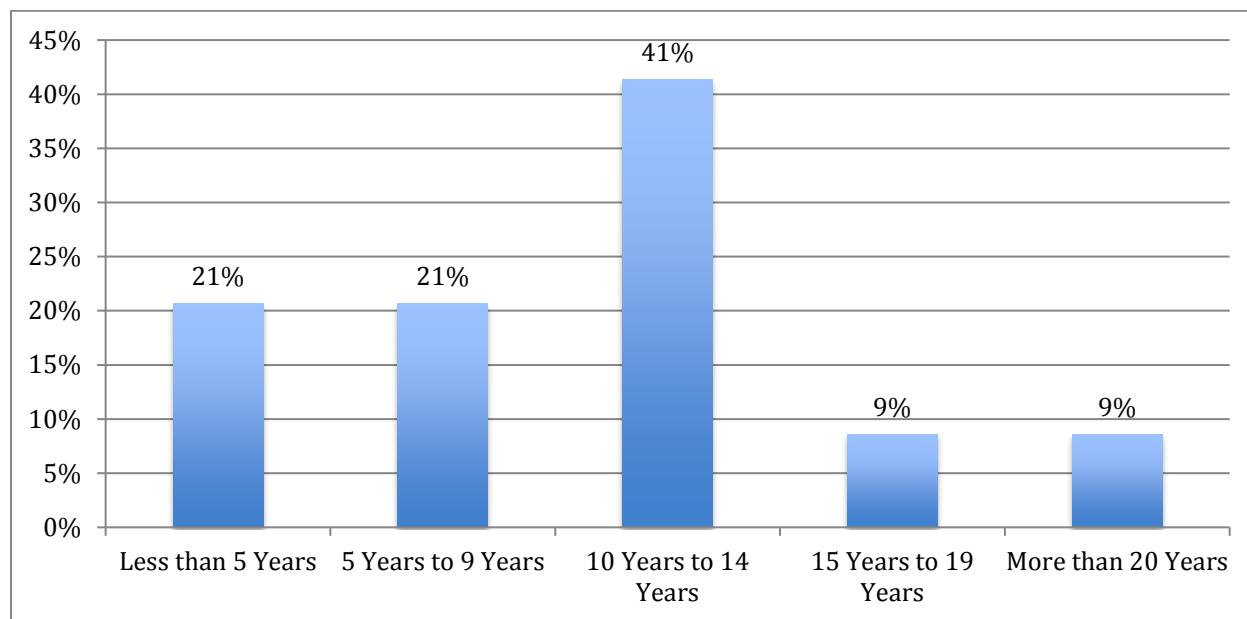
questions relative to demographic data. Administrators reported to their job title and years of experience as an administrator. Of the 60 participants in this survey, the highest response rate came from building level administrators, where 28 of the participants (46%) were principals and 15 of the participants (25%) were assistant principals or vice principals. There were also district level administrators responsible for supervisory functions that accounted for the rest of the participants, such as assistant superintendents (17%), directors of curriculum (5%), directors of special education (5%), and those who classify their job titles as “Other” (5%). These categories are displayed below in Figure 1.



**Figure 1 - Number of Administrative Participants**

Participants also submitted their experience level. Of the 60 participants in this survey, the most commonly recorded experience level fell within the range of 10 to 14 year in school administration, with 41% of the administrators responding this way. The second most

commonly reported experience levels were those that were newer to school administration, the 5 to 9 year range and the less than 5 year range, where 21% of the participants responded for each of the two categories respectively. The final two sets of participants had the most experience in school administration, where 9% of the participants responded in the 15 to 19 year range, and 9% recorded more than 20 years of experience as a school administrator. Within the last subset, one participant stated that he or she had over 34 years of experience as a school administrator. This analysis is displayed below in Figure 2.

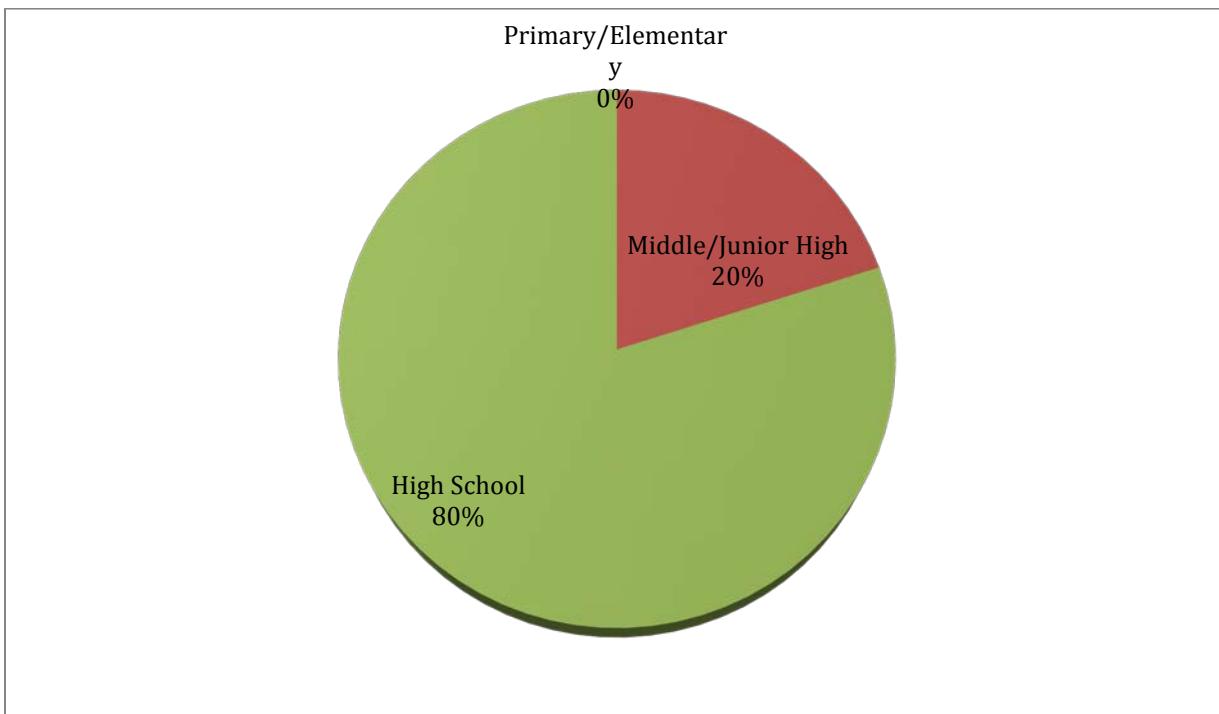


**Figure 2 - Years of Experience as an Administrator**

### **3.6.3 Characteristics of Participants – Union Presidents**

In order to further analyze the data I collected from union presidents, I included three demographic questions at the beginning of the union president survey. One of these pieces of

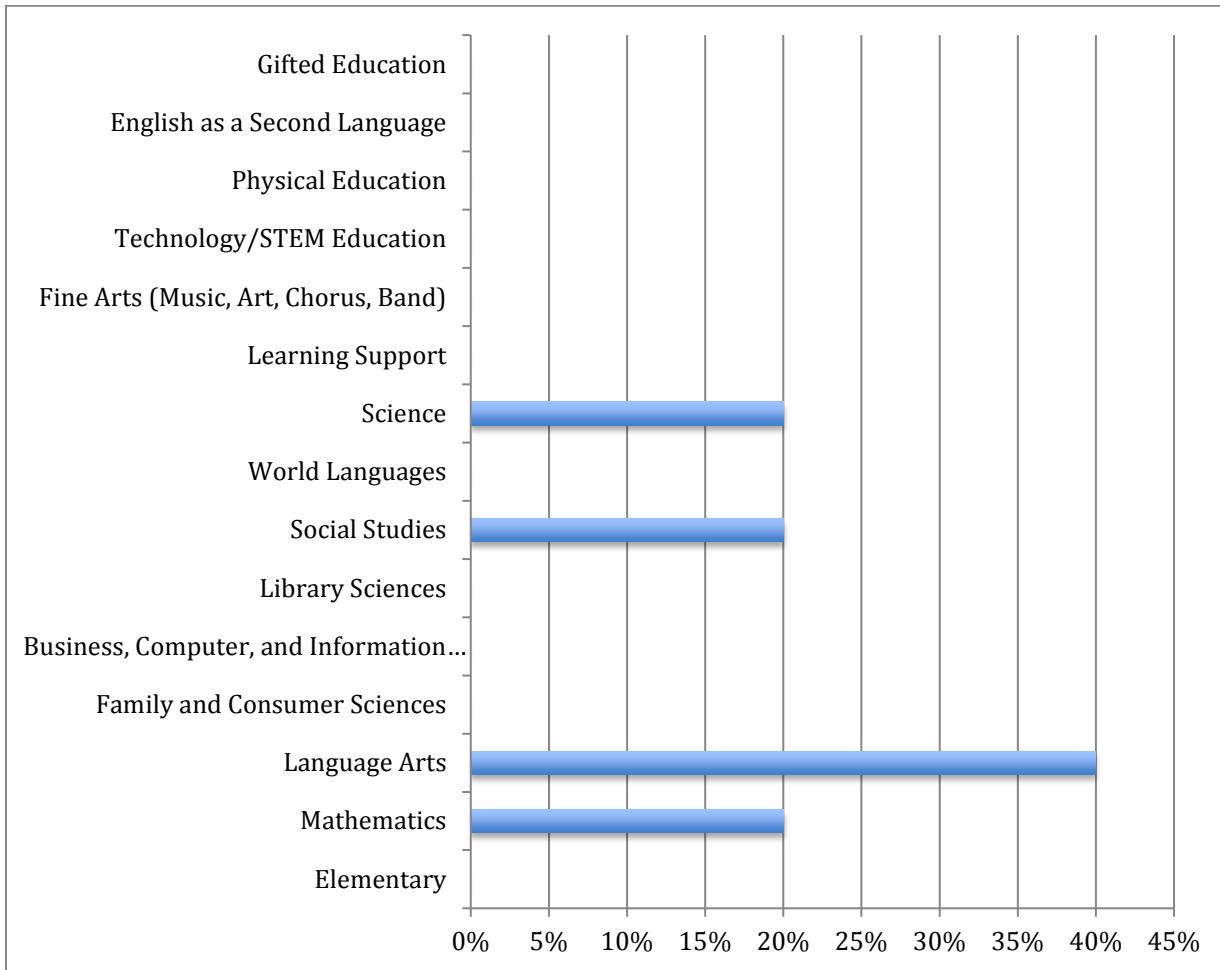
demographic data was the building level in which the union president teaches on a daily basis. For the purposes of this survey, I split the classifications into three levels: primary/elementary, middle/junior high, and high school. Of the 5 union presidents that participated in the survey, the majority of those participants who responded teach in a high school setting. The only other educational setting represented in this data set is the middle/junior high school setting, where 20% of the participants responded. This analysis is displayed below in Figure 3.



**Figure 3 - Building Setting of Union Presidents**

I asked the union presidents to identify the content area in which they are certified as another means to stratify the data I collected. Of the 15 content areas listed below in Figure 4, the most commonly reported content area was Language Arts (40%). The remaining content areas represented in this survey are Science, Social Studies, and Mathematics, each of which

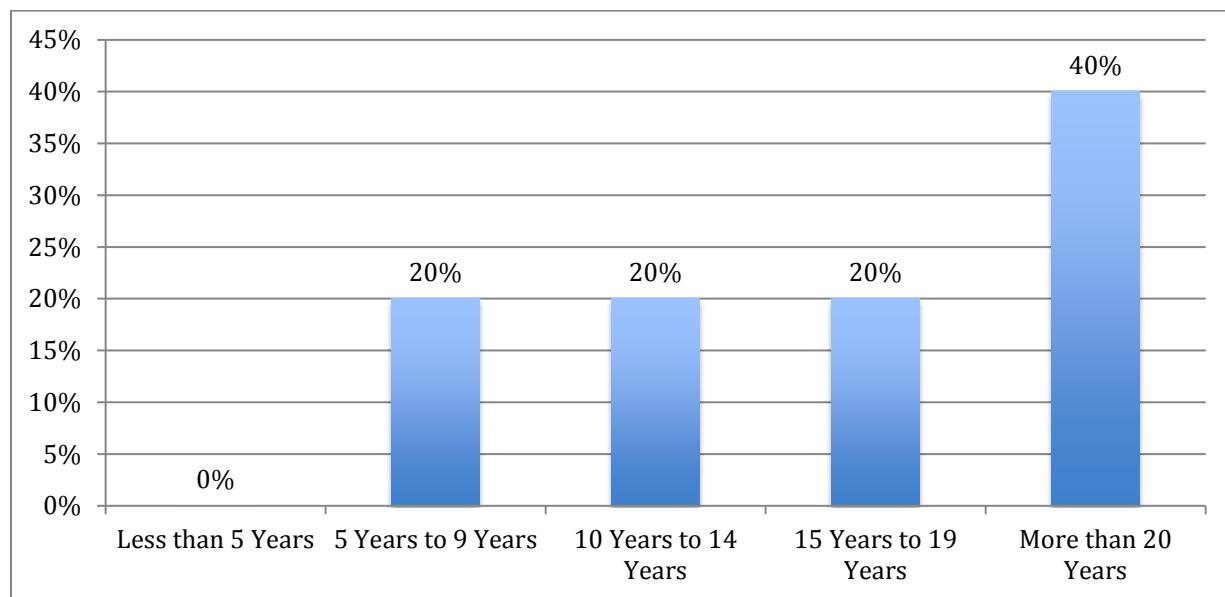
account for an equal 20% of the union president responses. This analysis is displayed below in Figure 4.



**Figure 4 - Content Area of Union Presidents**

After the participants disclosed their educational setting and content area, they submitted their experience level as a third means for analysis. Of the 5 participants in this survey, the most commonly recorded (40% of the participants) experience level was the “More than 20 years,” which highlighted the vast amount of years of experience the union presidents had as a teacher. The remaining sets of participants had an equal amount of participants spread amongst three

experience levels as a teacher, where 20% of the participants responded in the 5 years to 9 years range, 20% of the participants responded in the 10 years to 14 years range, and 20% recorded in the 15 years to 19 years range as a teacher. This analysis is displayed below in Figure 5. In terms of years of experience as a union president, the responses ranged from 3 years to 7 years, with 60% of the participants responding with 3 years of union leadership experience.



**Figure 5 - Union Presidents' Years of Experience as a Teacher**

### **3.7 MATERIALS AND INSTRUMENTS**

For the purposes of the study, I chose an electronic survey that can be easily transmitted to multiple districts across the region. When I began to create my research methodology for this study, I thought about the surveys I participated in over the past 10 years of my career. Since every survey I participated in was in an online format and communicated through email, I chose

to explore the contemporary research relative to electronic surveys. Although online surveys themselves do not generate the high response rates that traditional, paper surveys do, when accompanied by an email communicating the purposes of the survey and including a link to the survey, the online surveys far surpass the effectiveness of the traditional paper survey format (Hayslett & Wildemuth, 2005).

I included copies of both of the surveys, one for administrators and one for teachers, in Appendix D and Appendix E, respectively. I also included the recruitment script (Appendix A) that I sent as both paper copy and as an email copy to the superintendents in the region, garnering support for the study in their district. Additionally, I included the participant recruitment script (Appendix B) and follow-up Thank You Letter (Appendix C). I used the University of Pittsburgh's Qualtrics Survey System to create and deploy the surveys and analyze the data gathered from both surveys in order to help identify the effects that Act 82 implementation had on the evaluation and supervision practices and policies in our region relative to educator professional development. Qualtrics is an online survey management system the University of Pittsburgh purchased for all of its students to utilize in their coursework. Through Qualtrics, I tracked response rates and participants. Each participant received a unique URL to participate in the survey, and Qualtrics was used to track those targeted participants who have not completed their surveys. I then used Qualtrics to send out the reminders described above.

### **3.8 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS**

Once survey responses were received from building level administrators responsible for supervising the professional staff, central office administrators responsible for supervising the professional staff, and union presidents identified through my selection process, I began quantitative analysis methods to highlight trends in the data that emerged through the responses of the participants.

Included in this overview are matrices (Appendices F, G, and H) that outline what type of data generated from the survey questions that are part of the study. The use of frequency distributions across response categories, measurements of central tendency, such as mean, median, mode, and standard deviation, and cross tabulation had utility in revealing patterns in the protocols and procedures that are occurring relative to effective professional development practices in Southwestern Pennsylvania schools that have similar enrollment numbers and per-pupil expenditures as the Belle Vernon Area School District. Through multiple figures such as charts, graphs, and tables, patterns in the data that were occurring throughout the region were outlined.

Specifically, the background information of the participants was described and reported via charts and in narrative form. Descriptive statistics, also known as measures of central tendency, were utilized to analyze the responses to all of the single-answer questions to both surveys. I used cross-tabulation to compare the responses from the participant groups relative to the questions relating to evaluation data being used to identify professional development options and teacher input into professional development. The responses to Question 3 in the Administrative Survey and Question 5 in the Union President Survey relating to the type of Act

82 trainings that participants attended were reported using a bar graph, and the responses were compared between administrator responses and teacher responses using cross tabulation.

The question regarding in-house Act 82 trainings (Question 4 in the Administrative Survey and Question 7 in the Union President Survey) were included in the surveys to analyze how effective the train-the-trainer model is working in these successful districts. The perception questions about how Act 82 had changed evaluation and supervision practices (Questions 5, 6, and 8 in the Administrative Survey and Questions 11, 12, and 13 in the Union President Survey) were analyzed to reconcile observed patterns to theoretical patterns expected, as well as observed responses in the pilot study. All of the follow-up questions were included in the survey to gather specific data regarding the practices occurring in the successful districts in Southwestern Pennsylvania. Data were analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively and were reported in narrative form to highlight what was occurring in these districts.

### **3.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

This study was designed to identify effects of Act 82 on teacher evaluation and supervision practices and professional development practices. However, other states and commonwealths throughout the nation experienced a massive reform of evaluation practices due to federal pressures and incentives (for example, the Race to the Top Grant). This study highlighted and identified trends in selected districts in the Southwestern Region of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and completely ignored the effects that were occurring in any other state or commonwealth that has made recent changes to their teacher evaluation and supervision practices and legislation.

Another limitation of the study was the scope of the outreach used for the recruitment of districts and participants. By limiting my sample space to districts in the top quartile of the most recent *Pittsburgh Business Times* rankings, the study ignored the effects that occurred throughout the remaining districts in the Southwestern Region of the Commonwealth, regardless of the magnitude of the effects that were in those districts as they implemented the mandates relative to Act 82.

### **3.10 RESEARCHER PERSPECTIVE**

I acknowledged and addressed the bias that may be present due to my current role as an administrator and past roles as a teacher in multiple districts in the region this study encompasses. In order to objectively analyze the responses and align the trends with current research contained in the scholarly literature, I acknowledged the personal connections and experiences I have had relative to teacher evaluation and supervision policies and practices and their alignment to professional development practices in order to move on to objective conclusions that identify the best practices that selected districts are implementing throughout the regions as a result of the mandates of Act 82.

Only select schools in the top quartile of the *Pittsburgh Business Times* rankings were included in order to counteract any bias that I bring to the study based on my previous interactions with or knowledge pertaining to staff members with whom I may have come into contact or may have heard about in my professional interactions at workshops, trainings, past job experiences, and classes. By selecting schools based on a developed and published ranking system, such as the *Pittsburgh Business Times*, I was able to select schools based on their

observed academic performance and size in order to analyze any trends in relation to the participants' responses. This method of targeting schools of similar size to the Belle Vernon Area School District in Southwestern Pennsylvania provided my district and school board with pertinent information to inform future reform efforts relating to the teacher evaluation and professional development processes.

### **3.11 ETHICAL ASSURANCES**

Ethical assurances were communicated to the participants in relation to this study in order to minimize risk to any of the participants. I acted in a transparent manner in communicating my intentions in performing the study and my plans to analyze and distribute research data and recommendations at the conclusion of the study. In this study, the participants incurred minimal risk if they chose to participate because responses were anonymous and no names of participants are reported. Since the participants volunteered their time and efforts to participate in the study, I plan to distribute the final report to each of the districts and every participant who agreed to be a part of the study. The study design and instruments were approved through the University of Pittsburgh's Human Resource Protection Office.

### **3.12 CONCLUSION**

One of the primary goals of the University of Pittsburgh's Administrative and Policy Studies department is the advancement of professional knowledge and practices. Deeply

embedded in this focus is the improvement of research and practices for educational leaders and policymakers. One of the most publicized and scrutinized initiatives over the past decade in public education is the reform of teacher evaluation and how this reform should affect professional development practices and offerings to help foster professional growth. It is important to acknowledge that this reform has brought forth many dilemmas and complexities due to current relationships with high stakes reporting and decision-making. As a current educational administrator, my comprehensive knowledge base relating to teacher evaluation and supervision models and their relationship to individualized professional development goals aimed at improving the art and science of teaching was mission critical. My continued goals are to advocate for the profession and further reforms in my own professional settings, along with helping other districts across the region in implementing the best practices that are occurring as highlighted through the results and analysis of this study.

## **4.0 RESULTS AND INTERPRETATIONS**

This chapter reports the data collected from the surveys outlined and provides an analysis of these data in relation to the three study questions described in Chapter 1. The data were collected electronically through the University of Pittsburgh's Qualtrics survey system. Within this system, I created and deployed the surveys and analyzed the data gathered from both surveys in order to help identify the effects that Act 82 is having on the evaluation and supervision practices and policies in our region relative to professional development. Through Qualtrics, I tracked response rates and participants. Each participant received a unique URL to participate in the survey.

This chapter is organized in three sections. The first section pertained to information about how the Educator Effectiveness Model influenced the way selected school districts in Southwestern Pennsylvania implemented or managed their teacher evaluation and supervision processes. This specifically illuminated how Act 82 has changed the practices in the districts participating in the surveys, clarifying the supports in place for districts of similar size and per-pupil expenditure to the Belle Vernon Area School District. It also provided insight into the depth of training opportunities available to all staff members relative to Act 82.

The second section related to the manner in which selected Southwestern Pennsylvania school districts offer professional development correlated to evaluation and supervision plans. Within this section I distinguished the districts that have mandatory professional development

components based on evaluation and supervision data, provided administrative and union leadership perspectives on teacher input into professional growth and professional development, and offered administrative and union leadership input on how to improve upon mandating professional development using evaluation and supervision data.

The final section of this chapter pertained to how union leaders in selected Southwestern Pennsylvania School Districts perceive the implementation of the Pennsylvania Educator Effectiveness Model and its impact on teacher performance. In this section, I analyzed union president perceptions compared with administrative perceptions of this implementation. I also identified certain practices and policies that helped selected districts implement the mandates of Act 82 in order to improve instruction, while clarifying how districts align Act 82 mandates to professional growth and how union presidents perceived teachers would like districts to manage the Pennsylvania Educator Effectiveness Model in relation to the processes and professional growth.

#### **4.1 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS MODEL**

Although it is important to understand the history of the multi-faceted roles of teacher supervision and evaluation, the focus of this study related to current trends in teacher supervision and evaluation in Pennsylvania. In fact, the two surveys used for data collection focused solely on the Educator Effectiveness Model brought forth through Act 82 of 2012. This section included an analysis of the trainings that teachers and administrators attended since the passage of this legislation, a review of current evaluation and supervision practices in selected districts, and an analysis of what these districts have changed due to the passage of the legislation.

#### **4.1.1 Analysis of Act 82 of 2012 Trainings**

Both school administrators and union presidents responded to questions relating to Act 82 trainings and their perceptions of the usefulness of the trainings. Of the 60 school administrators who responded to the survey, the most regularly attended type of trainings was intermediate unit trainings, followed by district level trainings, Pennsylvania Department of Education trainings, building level, and other trainings related to the legislation. Although the majority of participants attended at least one of the identified types of trainings, the average number of trainings they each attended varied, as outlined in Table 2 below.

	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Mode</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
<b>PDE Trainings</b>	1.48	1	0	0	15	2.81
<b>Intermediate Unit Trainings</b>	2.89	2	2	0	25	4.16
<b>District Level Trainings</b>	4.93	2	1	0	45	8.22
<b>Building Level Trainings</b>	3.73	0	0	0	65	11.04
<b>Other Trainings</b>	0.57	0	0	0	6	1.36

**Table 2 - Average Number of Trainings Attended By School Administrators**

Overall, both groups (administrators and union presidents) identified the district level trainings as being useful. Another type of training that union presidents identified as being extremely useful was training offered by the Pennsylvania State Education Association/American Federation of Teachers. Similarly, the school administrators claimed that intermediate unit trainings were the most useful type of training relative to the processes and protocols. A

summary of both the school administrators' responses and the union presidents' responses are outlined in Table 3.

Administrators				Type of Training	Union Presidents				
Extremely Useful	Useful	Not Useful At All	Did Not Attend		Extremely Useful	Useful	Not Useful At All	Did Not Attend	Have Not Received Teacher Feedback
7%	38%	7%	48%	<b>PDE Trainings</b>	0%	0%	20%	40%	40%
12%	77%	9%	2%	<b>Intermediate Unit Trainings</b>	20%	20%	0%	20%	40%
23%	65%	0%	12%	<b>District Level Trainings</b>	0%	80%	0%	0%	20%
26%	23%	0%	51%	<b>Building Level Trainings</b>	0%	60%	0%	0%	40%
13%	10%	0%	77%	<b>Other Trainings</b>	0%	0%	0%	60%	40%

**Table 3 - Perceptions of Trainings**

Within the administrative survey, there were two questions relating to the responsibilities of administrators in relation to Act 82 trainings. One of the questions asked administrators to respond to whether or not they conducted their own Act 82 trainings within their district for other staff members. Of those participants who responded, 55% of the administrators stated that they conducted Act 82 trainings with other administrations in the district, and 61% of the administrators conducted Act 82 trainings with teachers from the district. The survey also included a question asking administrators to identify whether or not their district created a new position to manage the responsibilities of Act 82, or whether these additional responsibilities

were added to the responsibilities of the administrators already in the district. No administrators stated a new position was created in his/her district for these new responsibilities; the majority (92%) stated that the district added these responsibilities to the administrators already within the district.

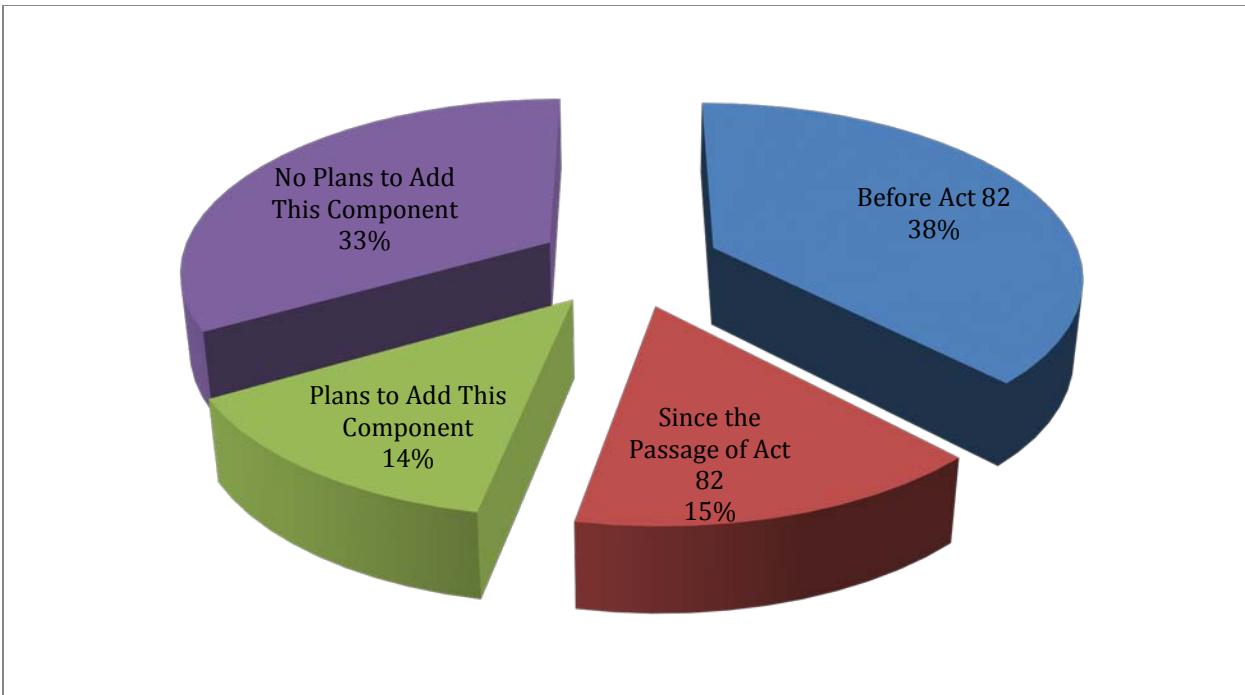
Another characteristic relative to Act 82 trainings important to this study is the type and amount of trainings the union leadership attended, along with the training the union leadership offered to the teachers in their districts. Each of the union presidents that responded to the survey stated that their union leadership attended at least one training, with every respondent attending PSEA/AFT Act 82 Trainings. The second most common type of trainings attended was district and building level trainings (40%), followed by intermediate unit trainings (20%). Eighty percent of these same participants stated that they, in turn, offered Act 82 trainings for their teaching staff to raise awareness and answer questions relative to the legislation.

The last survey component relating to Act 82 trainings to which administrators responded regarded the inclusion of Act 82 discussions in a district's Teacher Induction Program. Of the participants who responded to the question, 95% of the participants stated that their district had specific components of the Teacher Induction Program dedicated to Act 82. However, the manner in which these trainings were integrated into the Teacher Induction Program varied. Participants revealed that 62% of the districts use central office staff to train new teachers about Act 82, whereas 10% of the districts use the intermediate unit trainers. Only 7% of the districts use their union leadership to help with this process as part of their induction program. In these trainings, new teachers were introduced to Act 82 for as little as one-hour sessions up to full-day sessions prior to the beginning of the school year, typically with follow-up modules that occur during one of the monthly induction meetings after school.

#### **4.1.2 Analysis of Teacher Evaluation and Supervision Practices**

Because this study involved teacher evaluation and supervision practices relative to professional development, district implementation of differentiated supervision plans and software programs to manage the newly mandated detailed processes had particular utility. Given the time-intensive protocol required of the Educator Effectiveness Model, the Pennsylvania Department of Education encouraged districts to implement a differentiated supervision plan in order to best manage the amount of administrative time devoted to Charlotte Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2013).

One of the sections of the administrative survey dealt with differentiated supervision plans. Specifically, administrators were asked to identify whether or not their district had a differentiated supervision plan prior to the passage of Act 82, whether or not their district adopted a differentiated supervision plan since the passage of Act 82, or whether or not their district has plans to adopt a differentiated supervision plan in the near future due to implementing Act 82. Of those participants who responded to this section of the survey, the majority of respondents (67%) stated that their district either had a differentiated supervision plan, implemented a differentiated supervision plan, or plans to implement a differentiated plan in the near future due to Act 82. Of this group, the largest subset came from participants who stated their district already had a differentiated supervision plan in place prior to Act 82 (38%). A breakdown of each of these response groups is outlined in Figure 6.

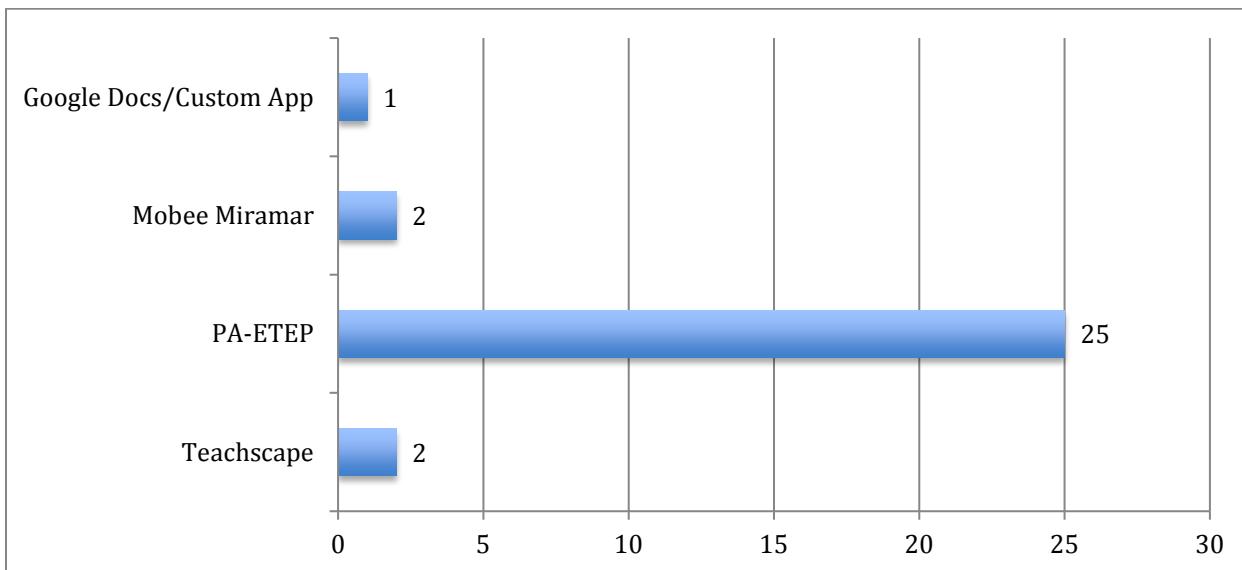


**Figure 6 - Differentiated Supervision Plan Implementation**

When given the chance to describe their differentiated supervision plans, administrators had varied explanations of the components of their plans. These responses were categorized into three groups: teacher rotation, description of components, and professional development. Of those participants who responded to the prompt, an equal amount (34% each) of administrators explained how their differentiated supervision plans relied heavily on administrators performing a full observation cycle with teachers on a rotating basis. Likewise, these differentiated supervision plans were aligned with professional development goals. This rotation varied between districts, with some districts operating on a three-year cycle, while others perform this function on a four-year cycle. Another recurring theme amongst districts was the description of components available in the differentiated supervision plans. Although the names of components varied across the districts, the descriptions were similar. Most districts had a traditional observation cycle, a collaborative professional development cycle, an individualized

professional development plan cycle, and an action research cycle. Of those responses that described the components of the differentiated supervision plan, approximately 63% of the responses included a description of a portfolio that teachers submitted as a culmination of their work throughout the year.

Another important component of contemporary evaluation and supervision models was the method by which districts collect and store the documentation now required by Act 82. Of those participants who responded this question, 86% of the participants responded that their district used some type of software to help manage this process and store all of the data necessary for each step of the evaluation and supervision processes. A further analysis of those 86% of participants revealed that the Pennsylvania Electronic Teacher Evaluation Portal (PA-ETEP), a private vendor product, was the most commonly used software in these selected districts. A breakdown of the types of software used by the districts participating in this survey is summarized in Figure 7.



**Figure 7 - Breakdown of Evaluation Software**

#### **4.1.3 Analysis of What Selected Districts Have Changed Due to Act 82**

Since the passage of Act 82, districts across the Commonwealth have had to change certain practices, policies, and protocols to implement and manage the mandates brought forth with this legislation. In the districts selected for inclusion in this study, the changes identified through the administrator and union president surveys related to the processes involved with teacher supervision and evaluation and the changes in stress levels among administrators and teachers due to any of these changes related to Act 82.

Overall, 95% of the administrators who chose to respond to this question stated that their district changed the evaluation and supervision processes due to Act 82 and its mandates. The changes examined in this survey related to the amount of time relegated to evaluation and supervision process, the amount of duties necessary to perform this function, the priority of the process relative to the Educator Effectiveness Model, the amount of discussions occurring relative to professional practice, the sharing of individual reflections relating to professional practice, and the additional efforts necessary by the teaching staff due to the Educator Effectiveness Model. Administrators responded to these descriptors of change utilizing a Likert scale that ranged from “Significantly Less” to “Significantly More.” Overall, the majority of responses fell within the “Moderately More” and “Significantly More” choices, highlighting the administrators’ feelings that there have been significant changes made within their district since the passage of Act 82 in these areas. The responses are summarized in Table 4.

Description of Changes Relative to Act 82	Significantly Less	Moderately Less	No Change	Moderately More	Significantly More
The amount of <u>time</u> delegated to supervision and evaluation	0.00%	0.00%	2.44%	31.71%	65.85%
The amount of <u>administrative duties</u> relating to supervision and evaluation	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	36.59%	63.41%
The <u>priority of the process</u> in which evaluations are conducted	0.00%	2.44%	17.07%	41.46%	39.02%
The <u>discussions</u> that are occurring relating to professional practice	2.44%	7.32%	9.76%	41.46%	39.02%
The level of <u>sharing of reflections</u> between administrators and teachers relative to professional practice	4.88%	0.00%	12.20%	39.02%	43.90%
The <u>effort</u> of teachers in addition to their teaching responsibilities (SLO's, reflections, ratings on rubrics, etc.)	0.00%	2.44%	7.32%	48.78%	41.46%

**Table 4 - Changes to Districts' Evaluation and Supervision Processes - Administrative Perception**

When asked to specifically describe what changed in their district, the administrators responded in a diverse manner. I categorized these responses into three areas: an increase in assuming instructional leadership responsibilities, an increase in the paperwork or documentation necessary during the evaluation and supervision processes, and an increase in the number of steps of the evaluation and supervision processes. Of those administrators who chose to offer responses to this question, 52% of administrators described the level of change of the number of steps of the evaluation and supervision processes. The second most commonly described change identified by administrators related to the amount of paperwork or documentation necessary during the evaluation and supervision processes, where 28% of respondents described this

change as an increase. The remaining responses (21%) included descriptions the increased focus on administrators' role of instructional leader since the passage of Act 82.

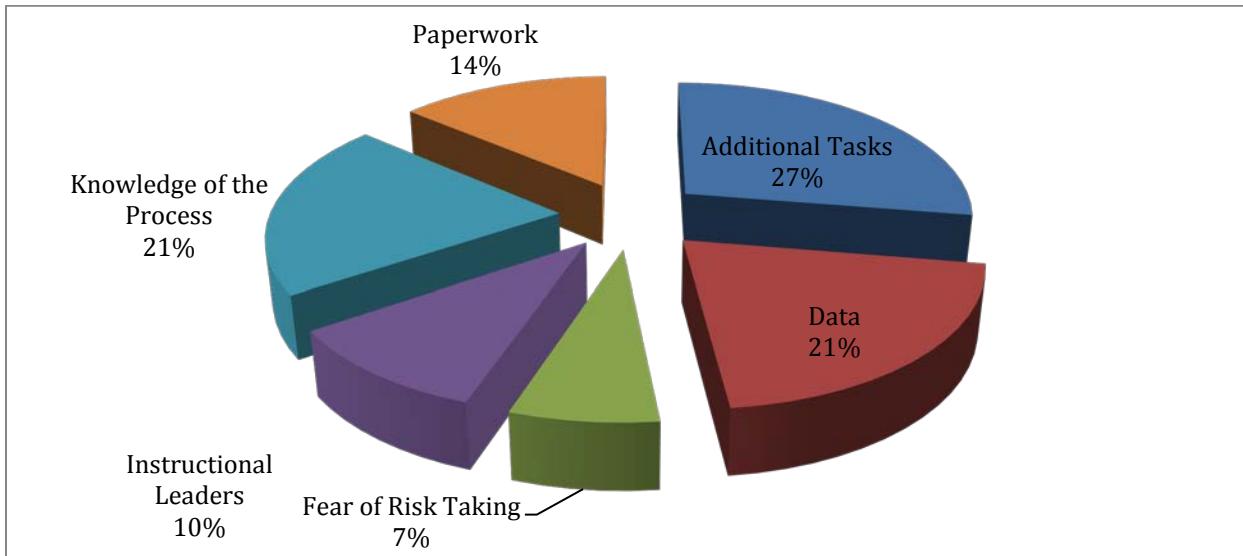
Similarly, administrators were asked to describe the stress levels apparent in their districts relative to the passage of Act 82 and its mandates. Within this data set, it is important to note that none of the administrators reported less stress, in both teachers and administrators, since the passage of Act 82. Conversely, the administrators reported a higher level of perceived stress among teachers and administrators in the same time frame. A breakdown of responses is shown below in Table 5.

<b>Question</b>	<b>Significantly Less</b>	<b>Moderately Less</b>	<b>No Change</b>	<b>Moderately More</b>	<b>Significantly More</b>
Stress levels of <b>teachers</b> relative to the new legislation	0%	0%	17%	66%	17%
Stress levels of <b>administrators</b> relative to the new legislation	0%	0%	0%	56%	34%

**Table 5 - Analysis of Stress Levels - Administrative Perceptions**

In order to better understand why administrators perceive stress levels to be increasing since the passage of Act 82, the survey included an opportunity for participants to share their thoughts in free response. Based on the responses of those participants who answered the question, six distinct themes emerged as reasons for the change in stress levels. The themes administrators described were the increase of additional tasks related to the Educator Effectiveness Model, the inclusion of data in the evaluation processes, the fear of taking risks, the knowledge of the new evaluation and supervision processes, the amount of paperwork or

documentation required in all of the evaluation and supervision processes, and the increased emphasis on administrators as instructional leaders. A breakdown of these responses is outlined below in Figure 8.



**Figure 8 - Breakdown of Administrative Stressors**

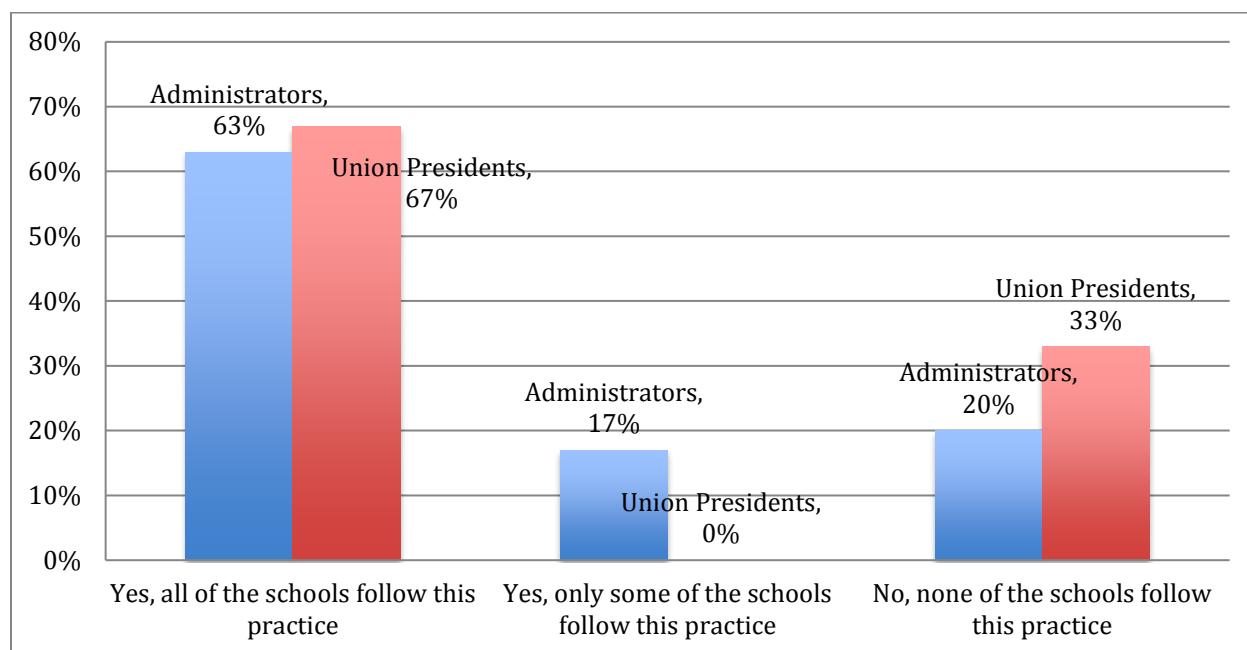
#### **4.2 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TEACHER EVALUATION AND SUPERVISION**

In order to analyze how selected school districts were utilizing data that administrators gathered from the evaluation and supervision processes, it was important to ask administrators and union presidents specific questions about current trends and practices within the districts participating in the study. The body of literature reviewed for this study provided a baseline of the different types of professional development best meeting the needs of the adult learner. This section outlined the data collected relating to the use of evaluation and supervision data for professional development plans, the types of professional development that districts were

offering the teaching staff, and any suggestions to improve upon these practices and reconcile theory from the literature and practice in districts regarding adult learning.

#### **4.2.1 Analysis of the Use of Evaluation and Supervision Data for Professional Development Plans**

In both surveys, participants responded to questions regarding the use of evaluation and supervision data in their school districts. Both union presidents and administrators responded in similar fashion, stating that data are used to identify areas of strength and weakness in terms of the instructional practices that teachers utilize in their classrooms. A breakdown of the participants' responses is found below in Figure 9, where the majority of administrators and union presidents stated that their districts utilize data collection from the evaluation and supervision processes in order to identify strengths and weaknesses in instructional practices.



**Figure 9 - The Use of Evaluation/Supervision Data**

The administrators who responded to this question explained various methods as to how evaluation and supervision data were used to identify strengths and weaknesses in instructional methodologies. For the 63% who responded that data collected by administrators are used in this process, the descriptive responses varied from describing certain components of Charlotte Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* that are a district focus to a more detailed description, where district and building leadership teams analyze the data on individual, department, and building level. One particular district used the findings among their overall collected data points to plan for professional development opportunities during the year and plan for building level goals throughout each school year. Two other participants revealed that their district's central office staff shared responsibility for the summative reports that the Pennsylvania Department of Education required of each district, outlining evaluation results with their principals. Just as well, they worked together to identify areas to improve upon through professional development offerings. The Act 48 committees in these districts then collaborated with the administration to identify the best professional development choices for the teaching staff.

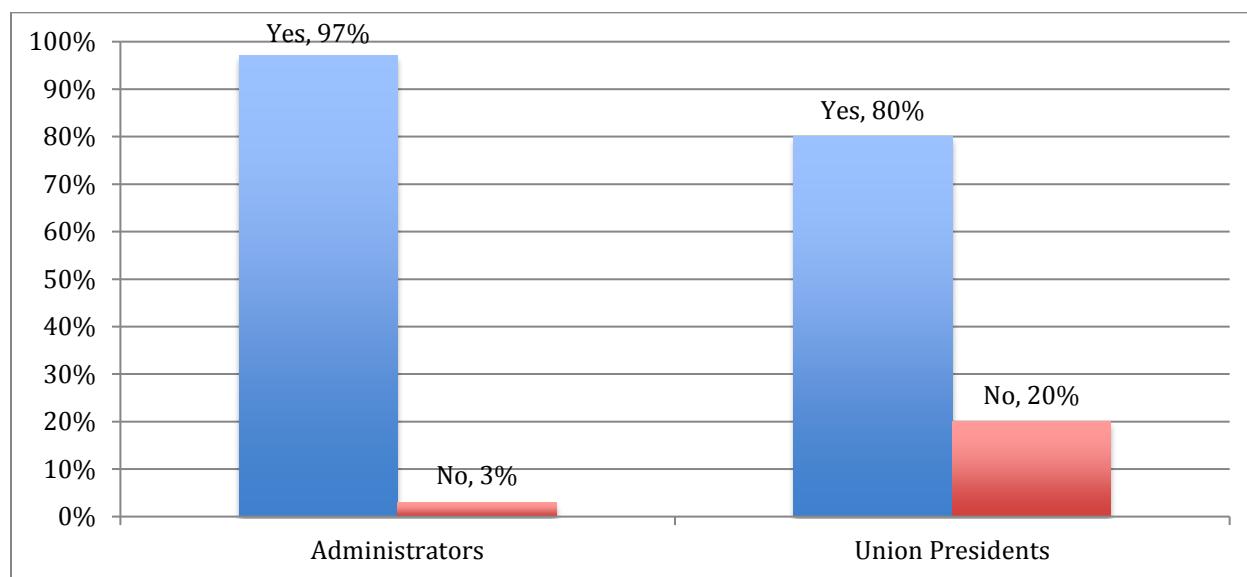
Additionally, union presidents were asked if administrators used any type of summative evaluation and supervision data as an instructional focus for faculty meetings or professional development seminars. In this case, 60% of the union presidents who responded stated their administration shared summative data at faculty meetings and professional development seminars, whereas others stated their administrators do not share these data in whole-group settings but in one-on-one sessions between administrator and educator. When the participants responded how their districts accomplish this task, the answers varied in nature. Some participants reported that testing data are shared at these sessions, but not typically summative evaluation and supervision data garnered from observation of practice. One participant shared

his/her district's practice, where teachers were given an opportunity to reflect on the evaluation and supervision data and make their own observations from the data. These observations revealed relative strengths and weaknesses in particular instructional areas. Those discussions then led to a few emergent concrete goals. Another participant shared that his or her district's focus for the coming year would relate to administrators recognizing certain areas of Charlotte Danielson's *Framework for Teaching*, which are noteworthy and present in the school practices and others that are not apparent.

The last question pertaining to professional development planning on both surveys required participants to identify their perceptions on teacher input into professional development plans. The results from this section of the surveys revealed a difference of opinion between school administrators and union presidents. The school administrators who responded to this section of the survey overwhelmingly (97%) stated that the teachers in their districts have input into the areas upon which they need to improve, whereas 80% of the union presidents stated that their teachers feel as if they have input into these decisions relating to professional growth. When these participants were asked to describe how this is carried out in their districts, both administrators and union presidents alike described the post-observation conference detailed through Act 82 and the Educator Effectiveness Model, where an administrator and a teacher choose components of Charlotte Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* that are areas of strength and areas to improve upon collaboratively to conclude the traditional observation model. One participant revealed that this practice often does not rely solely on the current year of evaluation and supervision data; it comes from earlier data gathered the year previous. In this case, teachers also choose areas to work on if there are new implementations or initiatives in the district that will require additional work or changes to current practice. For instance, when a district moved

to a balanced literacy program for Language Arts instructional periods, many teachers had to adjust their classroom management and some lesson planning practices in order to fulfill the expectations of the new initiative. This particular focus was a priority component of each the language arts teachers' professional development plans.

The only variance of this procedure related to the number of components identified through this process. Of those participants who included this information in their response, 12% stated only one component is discussed, whereas 65% stated that two components are discussed. The remaining 23% discussed three separate components for both strengths and areas to grow. The responses for these sets of questions are outlined below in Figure 10.



**Figure 10 - Perceptions on Teacher Input Into Professional Development Plans**

#### **4.2.2 Professional Development Options**

The next section of the administrative and union president surveys focused solely on professional development options that are considered and offered at the selected school districts participating in this study. In this section, the participants responded to questions about their

beliefs and the beliefs of their teaching staff in regard to staff participation in professional development opportunities. Additionally, union presidents were also asked to identify the perceptions of their teaching staff in regard to participating in professional development planned by districts in order to help teachers improve upon areas identified through the evaluation and supervision processes, and whether or not their teachers felt their administrators were capable of identifying professional development opportunities based on these results. The last question required participants to identify what kind of professional development options were available in each of their respective districts.

When asked about the perceptions of professional development offerings at their districts, the participants who responded to these questions revealed two sets of realities. The administrators responded that teachers were asked, but not required, to attend a myriad of professional development options, with the most commonly chosen response being outside of the district workshops, seminars, or courses, taken individually (55% response rate). Conversely, only 27% of these administrators stated that teachers are required to attend the same type of professional development activities. The second highest reported professional development type was in-district workshops, seminars, or courses, taken as part of a group. In this case, 10% of the administrators who responded stated that teachers were asked, but not required, to attend this type of professional development offering, this means less than the 58% of the administrators who responded explained that teachers are required to attend professional development based on evaluation results. An analysis of these responses is shown below in Table 6.

When asked the same questions, union presidents responded differently. The union presidents responded that teachers were asked, but not required, to attend more types professional development options than being required to attend certain types. For instance, there

were three professional development options listed as being utilized in these selected districts, the most commonly reported types were outside of the district workshops, seminars, or courses, taken individually (40% response rate) and in-district workshops, seminars, or courses, taken as part of a group (40% response rate). The union presidents' responses regarding required professional development options varied from their administrative counterparts. Every union president that responded to this question stated that the only option that teachers were required to attend was in-district workshops, seminars, or courses, taken as part of a group. The teachers have reported no other types of professional development options to their union presidents. An analysis of these responses is shown below in Table 7.

<b>Question</b>	<b>Outside of the district workshops, seminars, or courses, taken individually</b>	<b>Outside of the district workshops, seminars, or courses, taken as part of a group</b>	<b>In-District workshops, seminars, or courses, taken individually</b>	<b>In-District workshops, seminars, or courses, taken as part of a group</b>	<b>Online webinars or courses</b>
Teachers are <u>asked, but not required,</u> to participate in certain activities based on evaluation results	55%	16%	10%	10%	10%
Teachers are <u>required</u> to attend professional development activities and workshops based on evaluation results	27%	0%	12%	58%	4%

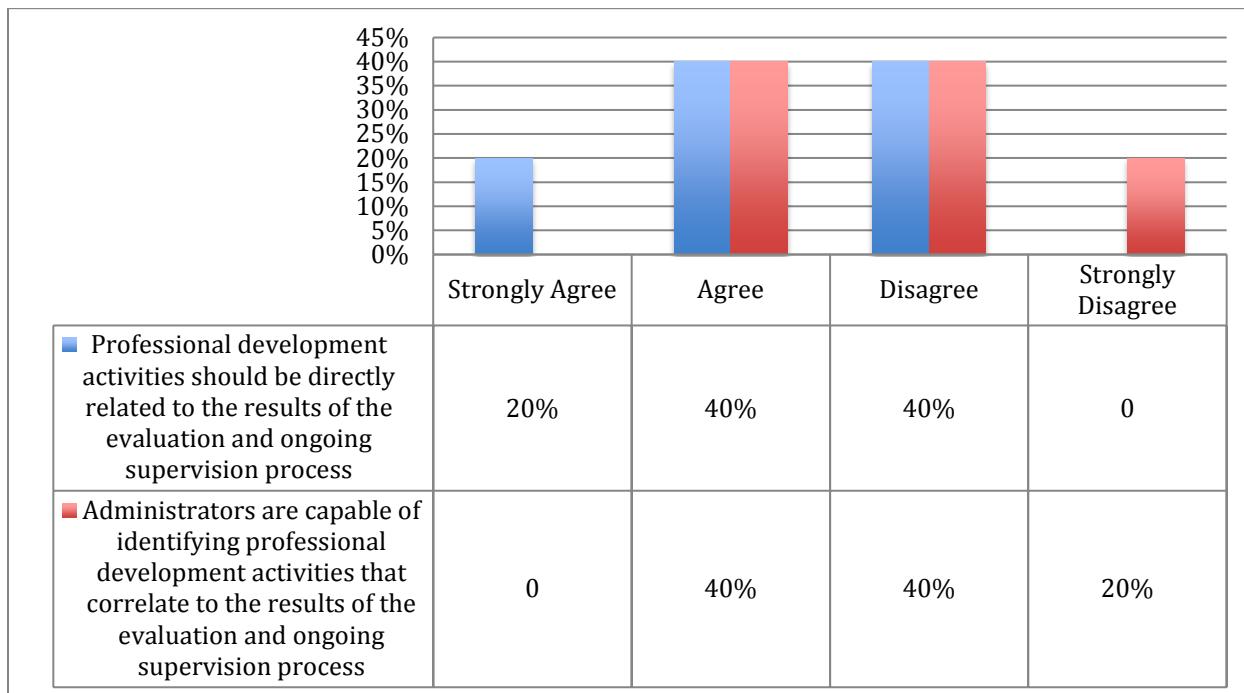
**Table 6 - Administrative Perceptions of Professional Development Offerings**

<b>Question</b>	<b>Outside of the district workshops, seminars, or courses, taken individually</b>	<b>Outside of the district workshops, seminars, or courses, taken as part of a group</b>	<b>In-District workshops, seminars, or courses, taken individually</b>	<b>In-District workshops, seminars, or courses, taken as part of a group</b>	<b>Online webinars or courses</b>
Teachers are <u>asked, but not required,</u> to participate in certain activities based on evaluation results	40%	0%	0%	40%	20%
Teachers are <u>required</u> to attend professional development activities and workshops based on evaluation results	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%

**Table 7 - Union President Perspectives on Professional Development Offerings**

Additionally, union presidents responded to questions pertaining to their teachers' perceptions on the use of evaluation and supervision data with regard to professional development options. The results to this set of questions are shown in Figure 11 below. In this case, the majority (60%) of union presidents who responded to this set of questions admitted that the teachers feel that professional development activities should be directly related to the results of the evaluation and on-going supervision process. However, the majority (60%) of the same set of participants responded that they do not believe that administrators were capable of identifying professional development activities that correlated to the results of the evaluation and on-going supervision process. Some of the participants provided responses to this section of

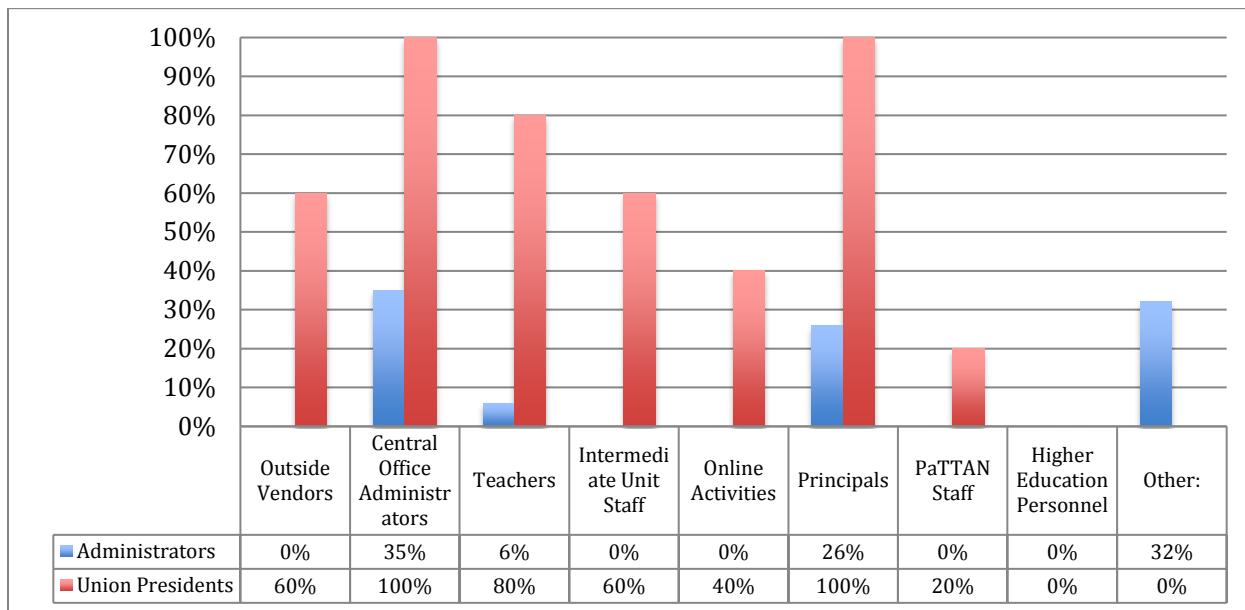
questions outlined options to work within this reality and make it more effective, which are summarized in the next section of this chapter.



**Figure 11 - Teacher Perceptions on Professional Development Based on Evaluation/Supervision Data**

The last question relating to professional development options related to the provider of the professional development in each of the selected districts. The data from this question revealed that the districts selected for this study utilized in-house professional development options more frequently than outside vendors or intermediate unit trainers to deliver these professional development options. Both administrators and union presidents stated that principals, central office administrators, and teachers were responsible for these professional development sessions in their districts, with a smaller amount of participants stating that the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN), outside vendors, and intermediate unit trainers came in to their districts to deliver the professional development

options. A comparison of administrative and union president responses is outlined below in Figure 12.

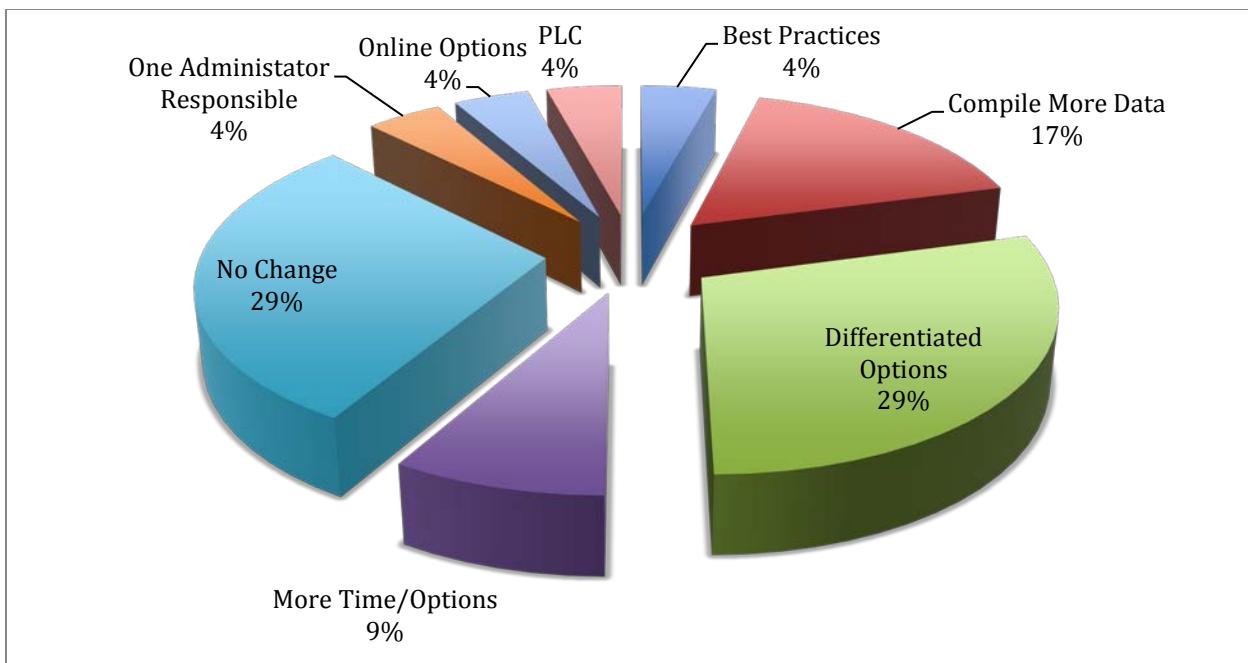


**Figure 12 - Professional Development Delivery**

#### **4.2.3 Suggestions on Implementing Professional Development Systems Using Evaluation and Supervision Data**

The last component of the administrative and union president surveys included in this study allowed participants to offer suggestions for implementing professional development systems utilizing evaluation and supervision data for various means. In this case, administrators and union presidents both provided responses to describe what a perfect system would look like in their school districts. These open-ended questions provided the participants the opportunity to express their beliefs and wishes, and their responses were coded to identify similarities between responses.

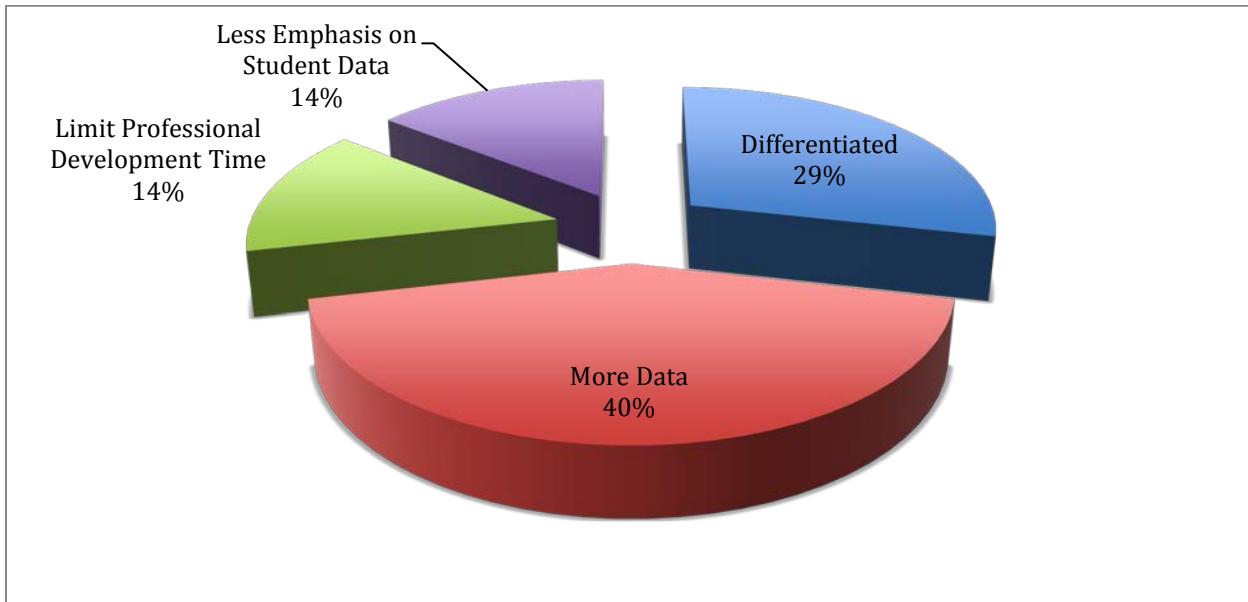
The suggestions made by the administrators who responded to this question ranged in detail from the inclusion of self-described “best practices” to the implementation of professional learning communities centered around improving instructional practices based on evaluation and supervision data. An analysis of these open-ended responses is shown below in Figure 13. Although 29% of those administrators who responded to this question stated that no change was necessary, others had some very distinct suggestions. The majority of suggestions included references to differentiated professional development for teachers. The detailed answers included in this reflection provided several suggestions for processes by which professional development may be differentiated based on evaluation and supervision data. For instance, one administrator shared his or her thoughts on the idea of getting behind a building goal/initiative rather than having teachers go their separate ways in choosing differentiated supervision projects. They further explained that this process would go a long way in building a true learning environment among teachers in any specific building, allowing differentiation in the work that each teacher did individually to accomplish the group’s mission. In this case, if implementing Google Classroom were a building goal, there would be some who were already proficient and their project could center on running learning sessions for those less proficient. Everyone would, in the end, be responsible to present what they had done to demonstrate growth and professional learning. This type of process would drive staff development and situate professional learning as a growth tool. This respondent revealed an emphasis on process, “the growth is in the process, not the outcome.”



**Figure 13 - Suggestions by Administrators**

Similarly, union presidents also targeted a differentiated type of professional development in their responses. For instance, one participant stated “less generic ways to impart professional development that avoid a one-size fits all approach would represent an improvement. Unfortunately, many of our teachers, have not for some time perceived professional development to be particularly useful.” Another union president explained scenarios where the data gathered from teachers would more seamlessly lead to appropriate delegating of individual teachers to professional development offerings suitable to the specific needs of an individual teacher. Overall, the most common suggestion was to increase the amount of evaluation and supervision data used in developing professional development plans. 40% of the responses to this question suggested a greater emphasis on the use of these data, more so than administrator-led goals and initiatives. They also provided suggestions such as a process where administrators communicate findings to the district's teachers and work with teacher

leaders about appropriate professional development opportunities to address the instructional practices in each building. A complete breakdown of union president responses is shown below in Figure 14.



**Figure 14 - Suggestions by Union Presidents**

#### **4.3 PERCEPTIONS OF UNION LEADERS ABOUT ACT 82'S IMPACT ON CLASSROOM PERFORMANCE**

According to the Pennsylvania Department of Education (2016), the goal of the Educator Effectiveness Model was to support the development of “effective educators in the classroom as well as those in school leadership positions, leading to the improvement of student achievement so that all of the children in Pennsylvania’s public schools are prepared to enter a career or post-secondary training” (2016). In order to determine how the implementation of this legislation has affected the selected school districts in this study, it was important to ask union presidents a

series of questions relating to the implementation of the legislation and whether or not the teachers affected by this legislation believed the Educator Effectiveness Model was helping to improve instruction in their classrooms. In order to accurately answer these sets of questions, union presidents needed to draw upon their experiences and their conversations with the teaching staff to capture current perceptions from their school buildings.

#### **4.3.1 Collaboration Between Union Representation and Administrative Staff During Act 82 Implementation**

Although the Educator Effectiveness Model was not officially signed into law until 2012, many districts across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania already piloted the model and used the materials prior to its official passage. Some other districts still have not implemented the Educator Effectiveness Model because of pre-existing language in their collective bargaining agreements specifically stating what type of form the evaluations need to use. In order to examine the effect that Act 82 has had on instructional practices, it was important to consider how long districts had implemented the procedures outlined through the Educator Effectiveness Model. To begin this section of questions, union presidents were asked to reveal how long their districts had implemented the Educator Effectiveness Model. Of the union presidents who responded to this question, 60% of the participants stated that their district had been implementing the Educator Effectiveness Model for three or more years. One of these participants explained that the administration and teachers used Charlotte Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* for ten years, far longer than the required time brought forth through the passage of Act 82. There was also one participant that did not have knowledge of their district's history in this regard.

Another important area to consider when examining the effectiveness of the Act 82 rollout was the amount of collaboration between district administrators and union leadership in planning for this implementation. 60% of union presidents who responded stated there was collaboration between the administrators and the union relevant to planning and implementing Act 82. Although some participants further explained this collaboration specifically, (e.g. implementation of a differentiated supervision model) others did not provide a detailed explanation of the level of collaboration. However, one of the participants fully explained this process:

Our district was significantly behind in terms of preparedness for the transition to Act 82. Our previous Superintendent was on his way out, and preparedness for Danielson and the new Evaluation system was virtually non-existent. Primarily, the Union leadership slowed down the implementation of Act 82 by helping to apprise our new leadership about how minimally instructed our staff was for this new teaching model. As a result, the District took some additional efforts to train our teachers in the 4 domains of Danielson and regarding the Value added quantitative use of the PSSA/Keystone data. Additionally, the Association brought in PSEA to do a workshop entitled "Living in Distinguished." The District the following fall also had professional development that further explicated the domains of Danielson. We have had some building level professional development concerning Webb's taxonomy, which has helped teachers better distinguish the Depth of Knowledge required by various assessment questions.

In this case, the district was able to understand their depth of knowledge in the process, identify a plan and resources aimed at closing these knowledge gaps, and implement the plan utilizing

people within the district and resources from outside the district in order to be better prepared for the implementation of Act 82.

Union presidents were finally asked to respond regarding teachers' perceptions of the administration's training levels on Act 82 and the practices and protocols relating to the legislation. In this case, the union presidents who responded to this question agreed that their teachers felt the trainings for their administrative staff adequately prepared their administrators for implementing the Educator Effectiveness Model. However three of the union presidents who responded to this question explained that they did not know how their teachers felt in this regard.

#### **4.3.2 Teacher Perceptions on Evaluation and Supervision Changes Relative to Act 82**

Parallel to administrative inquiry regarding what the Act 82 changes have meant in practice, union presidents were asked to identify changes from their perspective. In the districts selected for inclusion in this study, the changes identified through the union president surveys related to the processes involved with teacher supervision and evaluation and the change in stress levels among administrators and teachers due to Act 82.

Overall, all union president respondents revealed that their district changed the evaluation and supervision processes due to Act 82 and its mandates. The changes examined in this survey related to the amount of time relegated to evaluation and supervision process, the increase in duties necessary to perform this function, the priority of the process relative to the Educator Effectiveness Model, the significance of discussions occurring relative to professional practice, the sharing of individual reflections relating to professional practice, and the additional efforts necessary by the teaching staff due to the Educator Effectiveness Model. Union presidents, like the administrators, responded to these descriptors of change utilizing a Likert scale that ranged

from “Significantly Less” to “Significantly More.” Overall, the majority of responses fell within the “Moderately More” and “Significantly More” choices highlighting the union presidents’ perceptions that significant changes have been made within their district since the passage of Act 82. This is consistent with the response rates from administrators, as well (see section 4.2). The responses are summarized in Table 8.

Question	Significantly Less	Moderately Less	No Change	Moderately More	Significantly More
The amount of <u>time</u> delegated to supervision and evaluation	0%	0%	0%	80%	20%
The amount of <u>administrative duties</u> relating to supervision and evaluation	0%	0%	0%	60%	40%
The <u>discussions</u> that are occurring relating to professional practice	0%	0%	40%	60%	0%
The level of <u>reflection</u> between administrators and teachers relative to professional practice	0%	0%	60%	40%	0%
The <u>concern</u> of teachers in addition to their teaching responsibilities (SLO's, reflections, ratings on rubrics, etc.)	0%	0%	0%	40%	60%
The <u>frequency</u> in which an administrator is in my classroom	0%	0%	60%	40%	0%
The <u>frequency</u> in which an administrator discusses instructional practices with me	0%	0%	60%	40%	0%

**Table 8 - Changes to Districts' Evaluation and Supervision Processes - Union President Perspective**

Similarly, union presidents were asked to describe the stress levels apparent in their districts relative to the passage of Act 82 and its mandates. Within this data set, it is important to note that none of the union presidents, similar to their administrative peers, reported less stress,

in both teachers and administrators, since the passage of Act 82. Conversely, the union presidents reported a higher level of perceived stress among teachers and administrators in the same time frame. A breakdown of responses is shown below in Table 9.

<b>Question</b>	<b>Significantly Less</b>	<b>Moderately Less</b>	<b>No Change</b>	<b>Moderately More</b>	<b>Significantly More</b>
Stress levels of <b>teachers</b> relative to the new legislation	0%	0%	0%	60%	40%
Stress levels of <b>administrators</b> relative to the new legislation	0%	0%	0%	60%	40%

**Table 9 - Analysis of Stress Levels - Union President Perspectives**

Perhaps the most integral set of questions relating to change in districts' evaluation and supervision practices since the implementation of Act 82 pertained to the change in the frequency of discussions relative to instructional practice. Union presidents were asked to respond to questions aimed at ascertaining teacher perception of the frequency of these types of discussions in their buildings. Forty percent (40%) of total respondents answered each of the questions regarding discussion about instructional practices outlined in the Educator Effectiveness Model, including an equal amount of discussions pertaining to distinguished behaviors and deficient behaviors. The highest response rate outlined in the summary data relates to professional development. Eighty percent (80%) of the participants who responded to this set of questions agreed that the frequency of discussions relative to professional development based on the 22 components of the Charlotte Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* utilized in the Educator Effectiveness Model occurred "Moderately More" since the

implementation of Act 82. A summary of the union presidents' responses can be found in Table 10.

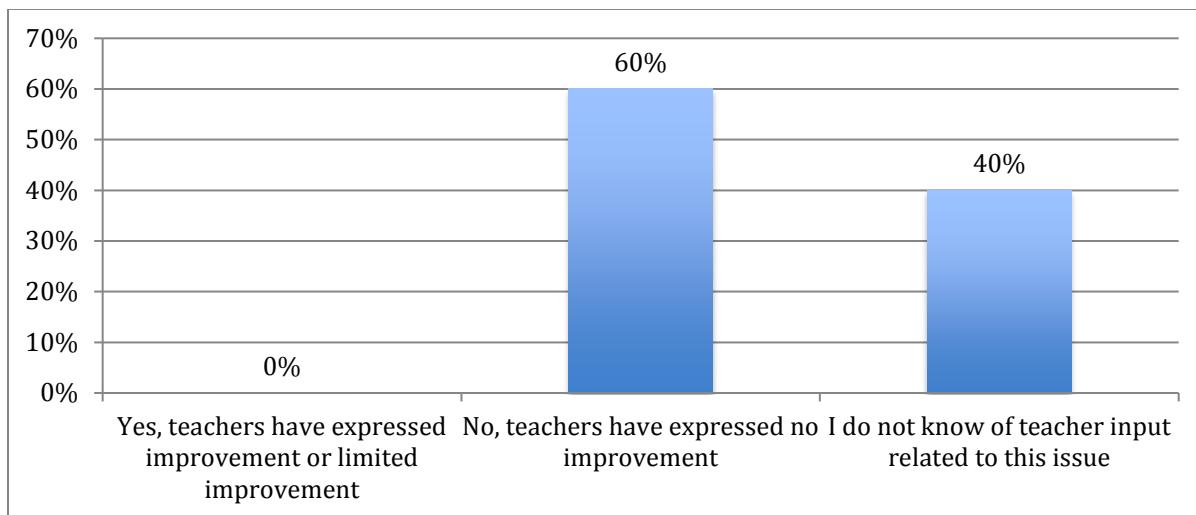
Question	Significantly Less	Moderately Less	No Change	Moderately More	Significantly More
The frequency of discussions relative to instructional practices outlined in the Educator Effectiveness Model	0%	0%	40%	40%	20%
The frequency of discussions relative to observed deficiencies outlined in the Educator Effectiveness Model	0%	0%	60%	40%	0%
The frequency of discussions relative to observed distinguished behaviors outlined in the Educator Effectiveness Model	20%	0%	40%	40%	0%
The frequency of discussions relative to professional development based on the 22 components of the Charlotte Danielson's <i>Framework for Teaching</i> utilized in the Educator Effectiveness Model	0%	0%	20%	80%	0%

**Table 10 - Union President Perspective of Frequency of Instructional Discussions**

#### **4.3.3 Teacher Perceptions on the Effectiveness of Act 82 Relative to Classroom Performance**

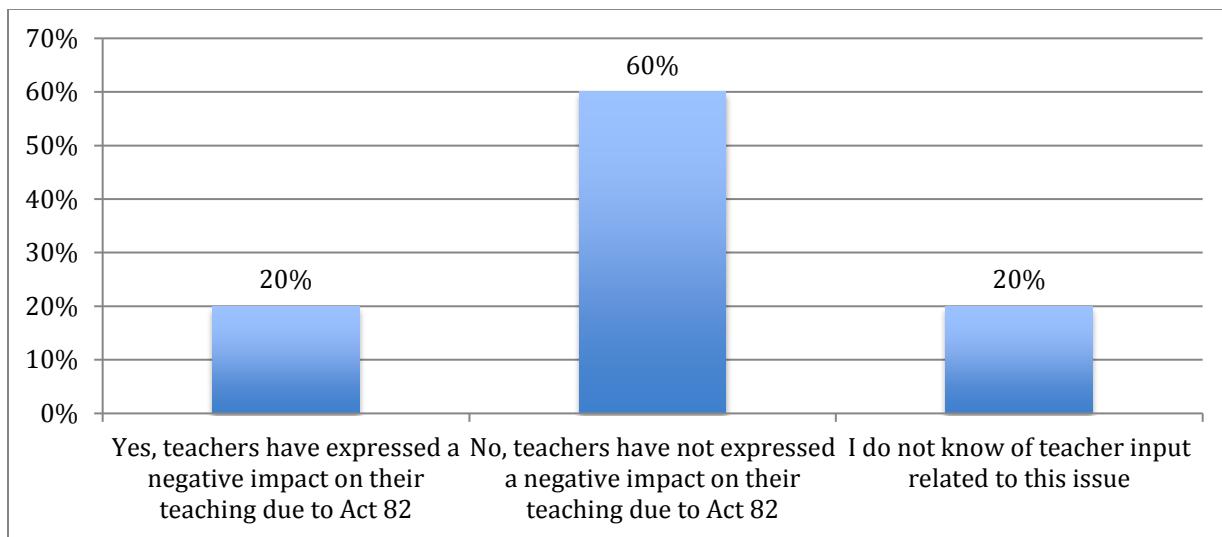
If the Pennsylvania Department of Education's goal behind the adoption of Act 82 was to support the development of effective educators in order to increase student achievement levels, analysis of teacher perception of the level of success of this legislation in meeting this goal had utility in judging the legislation's effectiveness. To this end, union presidents were asked to respond to a series of questions relating teacher communication of any improvement since their district's implementation of Act 82. Of those participants who chose to respond to this question,

no union presidents responded with any evidence of teachers explaining improved instructional practice due to its passage. In reality, 60% of the participants stated that their teachers have expressed no improvement due to the implementation of the Educator Effectiveness Model, and 40% of the participants explained that this has not been a topic of discussion in their schools. A breakdown of these responses is shown below in Figure 15.



**Figure 15 - Union President Responses Relative to Improved Instructional Practices**

Similarly, union presidents were asked whether their teachers believe that Act 82 has had a negative impact in their buildings since its inception. Although 60% of those union presidents who responded explained that the legislation did not have a negative impact on instruction in their buildings, 20% explained a level of negative impact since the implementation of the legislation in their districts. When asked to further explain this stance, union presidents shared various reasons, most notably the amount of paperwork required of the Educator Effectiveness Model. One participant shared that the amount of time used to perform these mandated practices would have a greater impact on student achievement if the teachers could use that time to plan better lessons, research more effective teaching practices, or research additional resources to enhance their lessons. A summary of these responses is shown below in Figure 16.



**Figure 16 - Union President Responses Relative to the Negative Impact of Act 82**

#### **4.4 SUMMARY OF RESULTS**

Overall, both the administrators and union presidents provided valuable data to include in this study. Through their responses to the survey questions, the participants painted a picture of change relating to the implementation of Act 82 and subsequent practices and protocols. Not only did the functions of evaluation and supervision change due to the requirements in terms of paperwork, a change in the amount of discussions administrators and teachers have in their buildings, specifically relevant to the 22 components of Charlotte Danielson's *Framework for Teaching*, was reported. Additionally, the stress levels in the buildings have increased, due in part to these changes and how Act 82 demands more data (student achievement data and observation data) relative to the evaluation and supervision processes.

However, when responding to questions regarding the alignment of the data collected from evaluation and supervision processes with professional development offerings, administrators and union presidents had a difference of opinion. Although they agreed that these data were shared with the faculty in one form or another, they differed on whether or not these data should be used to assign professional development options so that teachers may improve their instructional practices. In fact, there were some union presidents that reported doubts brought forth from classroom teachers about their administrators' ability to use the Educator Effectiveness Model to identify areas of growth for professional development opportunities.

The union presidents also shared the frustrations of the teaching staff relative to the implementation of the mandates related to Act 82. Essentially, the perception among the teachers was that subsequent changes have not led to increased instructional outcomes in the classroom. However, when asked to provide any additional comments about Act 82, both administrators and union presidents shared positive comments about the legislation. In this regard, 57% of administrators included comments about the positive changes the legislation brought about in their districts, whereas only 25% of the union presidents included positive comments about the legislation. Equally important was the notion of negativity surrounding the legislation. Forty-two percent (42%) of the administrators and 50% of the union presidents spoke to negative changes in their evaluation and supervision processes and protocols since implementation of the legislation.

## **5.0 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS**

In the previous chapter, I presented the data collected from the surveys outlined in my methodology and provided an analysis of these data in relation to the 3 study questions described chapter 1. This chapter consisted of a discussion of these findings relating back to the review of literature in chapter 2. It also provided implications for practice, for policy, and for research relative to how the selected school districts have implemented Act 82 and how they conducted their professional development programs.

### **5.1 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

The findings presented in chapters 3 and 4 revealed how selected school districts operate in relation to making decisions regarding supervision. This chapter offered more extensive discussion of these findings and exploration of implications relating the findings to the literature.

#### **5.1.1 Changes to the Evaluation and Supervision Processes Since the Implementation of Act 82**

The processes of evaluation and supervision are often intertwined, serving multi-faceted roles in the school setting. According to Thomas Sergiovanni (1985), supervision exists as an

applied field of study with implications for the classroom. As such, both practical and theoretical perspectives on supervision apply. Theoretical perspectives aim to highlight those observable factors administrators can experience in the classroom, whereas the practical perspective provides a forum where the teacher and administrator work together to define classroom realities for students, including instructional strategies and teacher competencies (Sergiovanni, 1985). Prior to the implementation of Act 82, I observed evaluation and supervision systems in Southwestern Pennsylvania that consisted of a single, fleeting classroom visit by a principal or other building administrator yielding a checklist of classroom conditions and teacher expectations. These types of evaluations were included in unreliable teacher evaluation systems that often didn't directly address the quality of instruction, much less measure actual student learning that occurs in the classroom (Toch, 2008).

With the implementation of Act 82 and the Educator Effectiveness Model included in the legislation, school districts in Southwest Pennsylvania were forced to adopt a more robust evaluation system, rather than having the local control to choose a system that they deemed appropriate for their administrators and teaching staff. *The Framework for Teaching* was based in the constructivist approach, where the primary goal of education was for students to understand important concepts and to develop important cognitive skills, and it was the teacher's responsibility to accomplish those goals while implementing daily lessons in their classrooms (Danielson, 2007). The Danielson model is based upon teachers' abilities to reflect upon their practice. Danielson (2007) argued, "the framework for teaching does not endorse any particular teaching style for all teachers; it does, however, enable educators to engage in conversations about the appropriateness of choices made at many points in a lesson or unit" (p. 25). Additionally, evaluators are trained to be objective and follow a detailed and specific rubric. This

type of practice that administrators and teachers follow may be completely different than the practices in some districts that have had stagnant evaluation practices, where most teachers earned the highest rating unless there were significant, repetitive concerns (Garrett, 2011).

Both the administrators and union presidents included in this survey agreed that this implementation has brought several distinct changes within their districts. For instance, both sets of participants agreed that the Educator Effectiveness Model has helped to increase the frequency of discussions occurring in their buildings relative to instructional practices. Additionally, both sets of participants agreed on increased reflection that is shared amongst administrators and teachers. This focus on reflection spoke to the ability of an educator to develop one's professional identity. Additionally, the schools in this study have realized an increase in the frequency that administrators are in classrooms collecting data for the evaluation and supervision processes – this additional data has proven extremely helpful fodder for reflection and discussion. Garman (1986) argued, “the teacher who maintains a reflective approach toward his or her practice continues to develop a mature professional identity” (p. 18). But in order for professionals to partake in this endeavor, they must first grapple with the difference between theoretical perspectives and practical perspectives. At the heart of the mismatch between professional knowledge perceived as theoretical and the actual context and practice of supervision was that teachers operated in a clinical role every day in the classroom rather than a theoretical mode based in research (Sergiovanni, 1985).

Within this implementation of the Educator Effectiveness Model, both administrators and union presidents shared the same view of the importance of professional development. These trainings, which were conducted in distinctly varied ways throughout the districts selected for the study, provided the participants with a knowledge base relating to the rubrics defined in the

legislation. Furthermore, a common vocabulary about instructional practices and expectations that are included in the rubric has emerged in the districts involved in this study.

However, these changes have also brought some negative side effects into the selected school districts. Both administrators and union presidents shared concerns about increased levels of stress, both among administrators and teachers, which accompanied the implementation of Act 82. The reasons shared through the surveys indicated that the increased amount of paperwork, the increased amount of time needed to conduct a clinical observation model, and the increased focus on data have become a burden to both administrators and teachers in the school setting.

With this in mind, many districts turned to implementing a differentiated supervision process. In differentiated supervision, professional employees developed an action plan for professional development unique to their needs and interests instead of participating in a traditional observation cycle. According to the New Teacher Project, evaluations should provide all teachers with regular feedback that helps them grow as professionals, no matter how long they have been in the classroom (The New Teacher Project, 2010). Although 61% of respondents revealed their districts already had a differentiated supervision model in place prior to the implementation of Act 82, 22% of participants reported that their district adopted a differentiated supervision plan since the legislation went into effect. Of those remaining, another 16% reported plans to implement a differentiated supervision plan in the near future to better manage the requirements of Act 82. One of the key components of any differentiated supervision model was the notion of reflection upon one's practice and determining an area to grow upon, further developing one's professional identity.

### **5.1.2 Current Trends in Professional Development Practices Related to the Implementation of Act 82**

One of the processes included in the Educator Effectiveness Model contained in Act 82 was a summary requiring administrators and teachers to collaborate and agree upon areas of strength and areas of growth. With this in mind, it was important to examine how schools offer professional development in order to help teachers grow in accordance with these summaries. However, it was also important to remember that adult learning theory suggests that since administrators were typically responsible for the planning of adult education programs, they had an ethical responsibility to keep the well-being of the teachers in mind while meeting the professional development requirements of the district (Scanlon & Schmitze, 2001). Based upon the survey results, it was apparent that the districts selected for this study offered these professional development sessions in various ways. Although most of the participants reported that principals and central office administrators were responsible for professional development, intermediate unit staff and outside consultants were also indicated as professional development providers.

Formal adult education sessions do not occur as regularly as many adults prefer. Primarily, workplace-learning experiences often occur in short bursts according to needs and costs (O'Toole & Essex, 2012). Similarly, survey respondents reported that these professional development sessions often occurred individually or in a group setting in their districts. Both union presidents and administrators reported that teachers were typically asked, but not mandated, to participate in these professional development sessions.

Prior to identifying which professional development options were available, it was important to consider how much input teachers had in identifying areas for individual and

collective growth. In the districts selected for this study, the participants agreed that teachers had input into these decisions, identifying growth areas through the evaluation and supervision processes. When this occurs, various professional development goals develop in a single building and across a district. This suggests that continuous professional development should be differentiated for novices and experienced teachers (Collinson, Kozina, Lin, Ling, Matheson, Newcombe, & Zogla, 2009).

In a differentiated learning model, some approaches to professional development experiences are designed to improve teachers' skills in implementing a highly specified set of instructional practices, whereas other opportunities may be designed to strengthen teachers' content knowledge, with desired changes in practice less clearly articulated. Likewise, there may be professional development opportunities that were designed to produce changes in relatively narrowly defined aspects of student achievement, whereas other sessions may be designed to produce large-scale changes in achievement (Roseler & Dentzau, 2013; Wayne et al., 2008;). When asked to identify how to best implement this type of model, union presidents stated that their teachers often asked for a more differentiated set of professional development options with professional development time and more data available (both student achievement data and summative supervision data) to help make informed decisions. Similarly, administrators shared the same responses for developing a more robust system of professional development opportunities for the teachers in their districts. However, administrators also shared that online offerings may also help to address this need, offering professional development at each teacher's level and on their own terms, whenever they want it.

### **5.1.3 Act 82's Effect on Instructional Practices**

Essentially, the effectiveness of the Educator Effectiveness Model will be gauged by whether or not any positive change has occurred in classroom instruction. With this in mind, it was important to determine whether or not teachers perceive any changes to these instructional strategies since the implementation of Act 82. In the short time that the legislation has been in effect, teachers reported no significant changes in their practices. On the contrary, 20% of the participants from the districts selected for this study reported that Act 82 had a negative impact on their teaching practices, primarily due to diverting time from instructional planning to the completion of the paperwork necessary to fulfill all of the protocols of the Educator Effectiveness Model.

Despite the general acceptance “that intensive, sustained, job-embedded professional development focused on the content of the subject that teachers teach was more likely to improve teacher knowledge, classroom instruction, and student achievement” (Wayne, 2008, p. 470), it was important to understand the vital role of the teacher-administrator relationship and the ability of both to use evaluation and supervision data to identify the appropriate professional development opportunities necessary to foster professional growth. “A good relationship between the school leader and the individual teacher is necessary for the teacher to be receptive to the knowledge and support of the school leader” (Tutyens, 2011, p. 897). However, the union presidents who participated in this study shared concerns regarding administrators’ ability to identify these opportunities. For instance, 60% of the participants stated that their teachers do not believe their administration can successfully identify these opportunities, which is unfortunate because 60% of the union presidents believe their teachers feel professional development should be chosen based on evaluation and supervision data. In this case,

professional development can be more effective and more efficient if supervisors link specific teachers' strengths and weaknesses with the learning opportunities most likely to enhance those strengths or remedy those weaknesses and bring about greater student learning experiences in the classroom (Hill, 2009). Such professional development innovations reflected an increasing level of understanding, trust, and collaboration among administrators, teachers, and local unions, as well as general understanding among administrators of professional development options. In these models, targeted professional growth was the focus, not just learning for learning's sake. With this in mind, it was important that differentiated professional development opportunities are offered for the entire teaching staff, regardless of experience level (Collinson, 2009).

Another revelation from this study related to the sharing of summative evaluation and supervision data. This practice was not consistent among the districts that participated in this study. In fact, this practice was not consistent among different buildings within the same district. Although the majority of administrators who participated in this study stated this practice was occurring in their buildings and districts, the union presidents shared a different perspective. When asked to offer suggestions to improve upon professional development offerings related to evaluation and supervision practices, union presidents relayed their teachers' wishes to have more discussion at the building and district level related to evaluation and supervision data, providing an instructional focus based on observed competencies. This wish was aligned with Hill's revelation that without the discussion of experiences, sharing of best practices, and opportunities for relevant questions, most teachers reported that professional development reinforced their existing practices, and a minority reported no effect at all (Hill, 2009).

Ultimately, the effectiveness with such programs will be determined by success in the classroom, both through student achievement gains and tangible improvements in instructional

strategies. With the increased emphasis on accountability and productivity by members of governmental agencies, media outlets, and advocacy groups, the purpose of continuous professional development may begin to be measured in terms of increased effectiveness in delivering specified learning outcomes for the students in the classrooms, rather than the intrinsic enhancement of professional knowledge and progression of professional growth (Kirkwood & Christie, 2006).

## **5.2 IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE**

One of the main purposes of this study was to identify evaluation and supervision practices and protocols occurring in selected districts in order to analyze my own district's practices related to implementation of Act 82. By identifying schools of similar size and similar per-pupil expenditures, I hoped to find practices and protocols that districts similar to the Belle Vernon Area School District are able to implement, providing lessons from which we might gain. As such, I summarized the implications for practice into two foci: evaluation and supervision practices and professional development practices aligned with evaluation and supervision data. However, it was equally important to understand how complex the function of a teacher is, as well as the complexities relating to supervision and evaluation practices.

### **5.2.1 Evaluation and Supervision Practices**

Act 82 brought widespread changes to teacher evaluation and supervision practices in the region and across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. In order for the legislation to have the

most effect in a district, it was important to consider the amount of training that occurred relative to the Educator Effectiveness Model. One main component of this model was the common language and expectations relating to instruction found in the rubric. Additionally, evaluators were trained to be objective and follow a detailed and specific rubric. The type of practice that administrators and teachers followed may be completely different than the practices in some districts that have had stagnant evaluation practices, where most teachers earned the highest rating unless there are significant, repetitive concerns (Garrett, 2011). With this in mind, districts should consider sustained, ongoing professional development sessions pertaining to the language and expectations of the Educator Effectiveness Model so that both administrators and teachers will function within the processes detailed within the legislation without any confusion surrounding the rubric or protocols.

Similar to the Chilean National Teacher Evaluation System examined in the review of the literature, Act 82 was developed based on the premise that improved teaching practices would increase student achievement. Since the Educator Effectiveness Model is a framework that provides every stakeholder with information about the weaknesses of teachers' practices and the areas that need most support, administrators and teachers can use these data to redesign professional development, teacher induction programs, and teacher education programs (Taut et al., 2010). Each of these improvements was proven to increase the quality of education. Given the results of this study, districts should consider planning professional development opportunities regarding the Educator Effectiveness Model. Furthermore, they also should examine how their district implements the legislation in their teacher induction programs, providing new teachers with the tools necessary to operate within the framework and start to gain an appreciation for the evaluation and supervision processes. Perhaps proper instruction relative

to this legislation will help teachers and administrators understand that professional growth is the focus of the Educator Effectiveness Model, not a compliance with legislative mandates. This ongoing focus may help to ensure consistency between buildings in a district to fulfill evaluation and supervision responsibilities. It further promises to lead to the additional consistency needed among administrators in relation to objectively making evaluation and supervision decisions based on collected data and the rubric within the Educator Effectiveness Model.

One of the main complaints revealed through this study was the time and paperwork required to properly implement the Educator Effectiveness Model. Both administrators and union presidents shared their concerns about these two items through their responses to several survey questions. Perhaps one solution districts could explore in order to minimize these concerns is to provide more time for teachers to be able to reflect and submit their paperwork mandated by the evaluation and supervision processes. Another solution revealed through the study is the use of software to track and store all of the paperwork necessary to implement the Educator Effectiveness Model. Through the use of these software packages, administrators and teachers do not need to worry about losing any paperwork, and the tracking helps both administrators and teachers to better understand their responsibilities in terms of the processes required of the Educator Effectiveness Model.

Another component districts should consider is a differentiated supervision model. With an increase in the time needed to properly perform a clinical observation using the Educator Effectiveness Model, administrators often cannot fit all of the clinical observations into their schedules, while continuing to fulfill the remaining responsibilities of their positions. By utilizing a differentiated supervision model, not only can districts help ease this time limitation on administrators, they may be able meet the individualized needs of every member of their

teaching staff. In a differentiated supervision model, the teacher is responsible for gathering data based on his or her individual pathway and sharing that with his or her administrator. Essentially, these data points in the differentiated supervision evaluation cycle help administrators determine what types of support or training the teacher needs (Garrett, 2011). They also serve as possible professional development topics for other staff members who could benefit from growing within the same component of the rubric and/or instructional area. Since adult learning theory concludes that adults are more likely to make a change in their practice if they have input into the areas they are looking to grow, a differentiated supervision model may provide this optimal environment for meaningful change.

### **5.2.2 Professional Development Aligned With Evaluation and Supervision Data**

Act 82 was framed around professional growth of all educators in order to increase the quality of instruction in the classroom. This study identified several professional development trends related to professional growth utilizing evaluation and supervision data. For instance, administrators and union presidents both agreed that continuous professional development should be different for beginning and experienced teachers. Not only does a differentiated model provide choice in professional development topics that best meet their needs, it provides them an opportunity to collaborate with other professionals as they search for the best practices of implementation (Collinson, Kozina, Lin, Ling, Matheson, Newcombe, & Zogla, 2009). In order to accomplish this, districts could form professional development committees comprised of teachers and administrators tasked with the responsibility to identify and provide choice in professional development to address certain areas of growth related to evaluation and supervision data. With this in mind, administrators could work to change the culture of “tension” that exists

between teachers and principals to more of a culture of “healthy collaboration” geared to address the growth needed by teachers in order to provide better learning outcomes for the students in the building. According to Hill, more and more districts are now transitioning to a differentiated professional development model, where professionals have the opportunity to choose topics, methods, and/or mastery levels. In other models, the supervisors help choose these professional development opportunities based on data gathered from the observation and evaluation processes (Hill, 2009).

### **5.3 IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY**

Although this study revealed that several union presidents disagree with this practice, it also revealed that teachers may perceive a certain level of input into these decisions relating to professional growth as beneficial. Arguably, teachers will be more likely to actively participate in these professional development opportunities if they knew a committee that included union representation and teachers identified these activities. Also, the data revealed that teachers favor a change from a one-size-fits-all approach to more of an individualized approach, where they can focus on topics related to their own professional growth. For instance, there may be professional development opportunities that are designed to produce changes in narrowly defined aspects of student achievement, relevant for individual growth, whereas others may be designed to produce large-scale changes in achievement that is related solely to the type of students taught (Roseler & Dentzau, 2013; Wayne et al., 2008). With these examples in mind, professional development aimed at providing specific improvements in a teacher’s practice may be more effective and more efficient if linked to specific teachers’ needs.

However, for change to occur, it needs to be systemic. If districts begin implementing practices that align professional development opportunities with evaluation and supervision data, they need to be prepared to make this a large-scale change that lasts and ranges in the scope of topics available to address professional growth. The life span of this type of a continuous professional development model can address many topics, from new knowledge, skills, strategies in the respective areas of competency, and application of appropriate technology, to influencing teacher beliefs and practices, affecting student learning outcomes and the implementation of educational reform, and establishing and strengthening teamwork and cooperation in the classroom (Jovanova-Mitkovska, 2010). When teachers begin to take ownership of their growth and share their successes with their peers, the culture begins to change to a more collaborative culture. A sharing out process may be necessary in order for the entire teaching staff to appreciate the hard work occurring throughout the building, highlighting the growth that is affecting the students in the classroom. Perhaps the evidence of change in relation to teaching methods, strategies, and the learning process can show the efficiency of each individual professional development opportunity, as well as the effectiveness of the collective, continuous processes. With this in mind, districts may find it beneficial to create a sharing out process that could help the entire teaching staff to appreciate the hard work occurring throughout the building, highlighting the growth that is affecting the students in the classroom

### **5.3.1 The Complexity of Teaching and Teacher Supervision**

The findings and implications for practice regarding teacher supervision and evaluation models in relation to professional development opportunities simplify extremely complex components of education. First of all, the practice of teaching is an extremely complex function,

one that situates itself within a myriad of variables that often are out of a teacher's sphere of influence, such as the student's home environment, past experiences, and perceptions on the value of education. Although there is research to suggest how to best approach the complexities of teaching, each community and each student presents a different set of challenges for even the most experienced teacher.

Similarly, the processes of supervision and evaluation are both exceptionally complex. In the attempt to simplify these processes, much is lost in translation. For instance, not every teacher in every building can be evaluated fairly using some of the more popular rubrics, such as the *Framework for Teaching*. In these situations, the culture and the context of the teaching assignment is paramount in the supervision and evaluation processes.

The dual purposes of supervision and evaluation (a yearly rating and a vehicle for professional growth) provide a context in which professional development can further complicate the relationship between the teacher and the administrator. The current reform movement involving teacher evaluation methods that includes high-stakes testing data and value-added measures has provided a highly contentious and debated context to this field of study. This tension may shift the focus from professional growth to more punitive measures, and districts may need to account for this tension when planning how to best implement the mandates of Act 82. Similarly, since professional development exists to support the teacher in relation to the data gathered through the supervision and evaluation processes, the disconnect between the purposes of professional development and the perception of teachers who complete the professional development opportunities often adds to the complexity of this field of study.

## **5.4     IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

As indicated in Chapter 3, although Act 82 had an effect throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, this study only focused on selected school districts in Southwestern Pennsylvania. In order to gain a more comprehensive analysis of the legislation, further study should be explored across the entire Commonwealth, including districts of varying size, socio-economic status, and physical location. With this in mind, it would be important to examine the practices and protocols in the larger urban districts in the Commonwealth, most notably those in Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Erie, and the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton areas due to their large student and teacher population.

Additionally, similar studies could be conducted across the nation, specifically with those states that have implemented similar teacher evaluation and supervision models galvanized by Race to The Top Initiatives supported by the United States Department of Education over the past five years. Perhaps other states have implemented Charlotte Danielson's *Framework For Teaching* differently, leading to different results both for classrooms and teachers' professional growth. Similarly, studies of evaluation and supervision processes of other nations could reveal a different way of managing the multi-faceted role of evaluation and supervision that our nation could explore for better results.

Perhaps a better way to truly understand how Act 82 has had an effect on teachers is to speak to teachers directly. For instance, a union president may think he or she has a good grasp on the thoughts and opinions of his or her teachers, but only those teachers themselves can document their own thoughts and opinions accurately. However, this is a monumental task, one that would take many months to finish due to several roadblocks. Many districts have policies

governing how teachers can participate in large-scale surveys, some of which require a school board decision in order for researchers to be able to conduct a survey.

Yet another suggestion for further study lies within principal preparation programs at the graduate level. Since the union presidents reported that teachers perceive that administrators are not fully capable of identifying professional development opportunities based on evaluation and supervision data, perhaps a survey of how this skill is developed and taught at the graduate level could help reveal any gaps in the curriculum that could remedy either administrator skill in identifying opportunities or correcting teacher perceptions. Additionally, professional development opportunities for administrators could be examined in relation to the skills administrators need in order to properly identify professional development opportunities based on evaluation and supervision data.

However, a missing piece to this whole study is the perspective of Charlotte Danielson, who created the *Framework for Teaching*. This evaluation model is the inspiration behind the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Educator Effectiveness Model. In this case, an interview with Danielson on how the Pennsylvania Department of Education and schools across the Commonwealth have implemented the Educator Effectiveness Model could reveal some profound information on whether or not her work is being used as intended and with fidelity. Since the union presidents reported that their teachers believe there have been no positive changes in their instructional methods since the implementation of Act 82, perhaps Danielson could point to some areas of the implementation that have gone awry. Or, perhaps she could share insights on teacher perceptions that there has been no effect in their practice, especially since the model is framed around professional growth.

In any case, the scope of this study can serve as a starting point for further exploration as the teacher evaluation and supervision processes evolve and as professional development opportunities are created to best meet the needs of the teachers in our nation's classrooms. As more research explores the alignment between evaluation and supervision data and professional development offerings, districts around the region, the Commonwealth, and the nation can better prepare their teaching staff for an ever-changing population of students, as well as for their diverse instructional needs.

## **6.0 CONCLUSION**

Although many reforms in education have come and gone since the release of the *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative For Educational Reform* report in 1983, the focus has shifted to improving and reforming teacher evaluation and supervision practices, often known as teacher effectiveness (The New Teacher Project, 2010). Although every teacher is required to be evaluated and supervised throughout an academic year, the manner in which this supervision and evaluation process occurs varies. A more effective teacher evaluation model predicated on professional development and growth for every stakeholder may lead to great gains in instructional methodologies, which, in turn, may increase student achievement. Unfortunately, 73% of teachers surveyed by the New Teacher Project said their most recent evaluation did not identify any areas for improvement. Furthermore, only 45% of those teachers for whom development areas of growth were identified reported that any type of useful support to make improvements in their instructional methodologies was offered (Weisberg et al., 2010, p. 6).

Similarly, The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (2010) argued, “in the absence of useful feedback, most teachers’ performance plateau by their third or fourth year on the job. Everyone loses as a result” (p. 3). With this in mind, the focus on evaluation and supervision has shifted to the type and frequency of feedback that a teacher receives in order to improve his or her craft. This study aimed at identifying teacher evaluation and supervision practices in Southwestern Pennsylvania that have changed in selected districts since the implementation of

Act 82 of 2012. Specifically, data from administrators and union presidents revealed the magnitude of the changes that have occurred, and whether or not these changes led to a more comprehensive set of practices and protocols relative to evaluation and supervision. Changes have occurred in both the functions of evaluation and supervision (due to the requirements in terms of paperwork), and the frequency of discussions administrators and teachers have in their buildings, specifically relevant to the 22 components of Charlotte Danielson's *Framework for Teaching*. Additionally, the stress levels in the buildings increased, due in part to these changes and how Act 82 put greater focus on more data (student achievement data and observation data) relative to the evaluation and supervision processes.

However, when responding to questions regarding the alignment of the data collected from evaluation and supervision processes with professional development offerings, administrators and union presidents shared a difference of opinion. Although they agreed that these data are shared with the faculty in one form or another, they differed on whether or not these data should be used to assign professional development options for teachers to participate in to grow their instructional practices. In fact, there were some union presidents who shared doubts present amongst their teachers about their administrators' ability to properly use the Educator Effectiveness Model to identify areas of growth for professional development opportunities.

The union presidents also shared the frustrations of the teachers relative to this implementation. Essentially, the perception among the teachers according to the union presidents was that all of these changes have not led to increased instructional outcomes in the classroom. Similarly, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation concluded that effective teaching can be measured, but the results are untrustworthy due to how unreliable teacher evaluation

methods have been carried out throughout the years (Resmovits, 2013). However, when asked to provide any additional comments about Act 82, both administrators and union presidents shared positive comments about the legislation. In this regard, 57% of administrators provided comments about the positive changes the legislation helped to implement in their districts, whereas only 25% of the union presidents shared the same viewpoint. Equally important was the notion of negativity surrounding the legislation. Forty-two percent of the administrators and 50% of the union presidents spoke to how the legislation brought about negative changes in their evaluation and supervision processes and protocols. Interestingly enough, since the release of the final *Measures of Effective Teaching* report, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has recognized these concerns among administrators and teachers and shifted its focus from teacher evaluation methods to teacher preparation programs (Resmovits, 2013).

Since the function of teacher evaluation and supervision serves many purposes, most notably one that is mandated by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and another that helps to frame professional growth, it is important to consider that this study aimed to gather information about both of these functions. One of the trends identified through the data collected in this study was that when feedback occurs in the evaluation and supervision processes, it was often varied in form and function. However, this feedback from administrators could be beneficial if utilized properly and framed within the function of constant professional improvement. This was in stark contrast of the types of feedback used solely for evaluative measures. By identifying schools of similar size and similar per-pupil expenditures, I hoped to find practices and protocols that a district similar to the Belle Vernon Area School District was able to implement, understanding that any changes I would bring forward to the administration, union leadership, and school board would be those that districts similar to ours were able to

successfully implement. Since the study involved an in-depth analysis of evaluation and supervision practices, specifically pertaining to professional development opportunities derived from these practices, the implications for practice stemmed from evaluation and supervision data as it relates entirely and directly to professional development practices.

The implementation of a new evaluation and supervision framework takes time. Many barriers to change exist and multiple stakeholders need to examine and develop the implementation of reform movements like this to make positive changes in the future of education in our struggling nation. Nevertheless, every student in every classroom deserves the opportunity to learn from research-based best practices. The New Teacher Project (2010) states, “to ensure that every child learns from the most effective teachers possible, schools must be able to gauge their teachers’ performance fairly and accurately” (p. 2). By implementing new comprehensive evaluation methods, and using those methods to build capacity in educators, governing boards are recognizing the challenge and accepting the professional work both administrators and educators can do in order to provide opportunities for professional growth in our nation’s schools.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Superintendent Recruitment Script**

Dear Superintendent,

My name is Jason Boone and I serve as the Principal of Belle Vernon Area High School, in addition to my district-level roles as the LEA and Assessment Coordinator. I am also a doctoral student of Education at the University of Pittsburgh. My doctoral research examines how the Educator Effectiveness Project (Section 1123 of Act 82) may have changed school district supervision practices and professional development initiatives.

Identifying the best implementation strategies for Act 82 and fostering successful ongoing professional development of school staff has far-reaching implications for all schools. It is possible for you and your staff to contribute to the body of knowledge surrounding current practices and perspectives on supervision and evaluation relative to professional development. Through my research, I hope to provide a forum amplifying the voices of practitioners and allowing others to learn from each other.

To help with this study, I am asking for your support and for you to encourage some of your central office administrators, building level administrators, and specifically, your union presidents to participate in this confidential electronic survey. Though the implications of this work are great, your staff commitment is relatively small: participants may take the survey online, or via standard mail, phone, or in a face-to-face interview. Regardless of the method of

participation, participant responses will be completely confidential and anonymous. The survey has less than 30 items and takes 15-30 minutes to complete. Participants will not incur any risk through this study, may decline to answer any questions during the survey, and may end the survey at any time, without penalty. Your assistance will not only help me to fulfill my research objectives toward my doctoral degree, but will provide you with further information on how your staff perceives the Educator Effectiveness Model. At the conclusion of my study, I will send you an executive summary that discusses the results based on data from every school district participating in the survey.

Thank you for your consideration and in anticipation of your assistance. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 724-244-5070 or by email at Jason.boone@bellevernonarea.net. If you would like to speak to my advisor, Dr. Cynthia Tananis, she can be reached at 412-648-7171 or through email at tananis@pitt.edu. I truly appreciate your help and support and look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Jason A. Boone

**HRPO APPROVAL # PRO16010372**

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Participant Recruitment Script**

Dear Participant,

My name is Jason Boone and I am a doctoral student at the University of Pittsburgh. I also serve as the Principal of Belle Vernon Area High School, in addition to my district-level roles as the LEA and Assessment Coordinator. I am conducting a research study for my doctoral dissertation to examine how school district procedures and policies may have changed due to the implications of Section 1123 of Act 82 (Educator Effectiveness Project). I also wish to explore if districts are implementing professional development any differently, specifically using these evaluation and supervision data.

Your superintendent agreed to support this study and is encouraging you to participate because he/she thought that you might be able to provide meaningful data and would be willing to participate in this electronic survey relative to initiatives your district are participating in. If you choose to participate in this study, you will complete an online survey that will last between 15-30 minutes. You can take this survey any time that is convenient for you. For those of you that do not feel comfortable participating in an online format, you are welcome to contact me for a survey I can deliver via standard mail, a face-to-face interview, or a phone interview. Your answers will be recorded and transcribed for data analysis purposes.

Any risk you may incur through the completion of this study would be minimal. Not only will the records pertaining to your involvement in this study will be kept confidential, but

any data that includes your identity will be stored in locked files and your identity will not be revealed in any description or publication of the research. An overview of the report will be sent to your superintendent to help identify how selected districts in the region are implementing professional development based off of evaluation and supervision data.

There are no costs to you for participating in this study and you will receive no compensation for your participation. At any time during the study, you may decline to answer any question and you may withdraw your participation, without penalty. If you consent to participate, please complete the electronic survey at the included link. If you would prefer to complete the survey via standard mail, phone, or in a face-to-face format, please contact me by phone at 724-244-5070 or by email at [jason.boone@bellevernonarea.net](mailto:jason.boone@bellevernonarea.net) and I will work with you to find the best date and time for us to complete the survey.

Your assistance will not only help me to fulfill my research objectives toward my doctoral degree, and help me to identify which structures and models best implement Act 82 and foster on-going professional development of the professional staff, but also provide your district and other districts in the region with further information on how selected districts in the region are implementing the Educator Effectiveness Model. Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me via email or by phone at 724-244-5070. If you would like to speak to my advisor, Dr. Cynthia Tananis, she can be reached at 412-648-7171 or through email at [tananis@pitt.edu](mailto:tananis@pitt.edu). I appreciate your interest and look forward to hearing from you.

**HRPO APPROVAL # PRO16010372**

Sincerely,

Jason A. Boone

## **APPENDIX C**

### **Follow Up Thank You Letter For Participants**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you very much for agreeing to volunteer for the follow-up interview relating to how Act 82 has changed the evaluation and supervision protocols and policies in your district. The intent of the follow-up interview will be to examine the relationship, if any, that exists between your district's evaluation and supervision protocols and policies and your district's professional development plans. I will send a separate email and phone number to schedule the best time for our interview.

**Researcher**

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I sincerely appreciate your time and consideration in being a participant in my study.

Yours in education,

Jason Boone

## **APPENDIX D**

### **Administrator Survey Questions**

#### ***Act 82 – Teacher Evaluation and Supervision Aligned to Professional Development Needs Survey***

*Thank you for choosing to participate in the Act 82 – Teacher Evaluation and Supervision Aligned to Professional Development Needs study. You will need to complete an on-line survey that will last between 15-30 minutes. You can take this survey any time that is convenient for you. For those of you that do not feel comfortable participating in an on-line format, you are welcome to contact me for a standard mail survey, a face-to-face interview, or a phone interview. Your answers will be recorded and transcribed for data analysis purposes.*

*Any risk you may incur through the completion of this study would be minimal. All records pertaining to your involvement in this study will be kept confidential. Your identity will not be revealed in any description or publication of the research. An overview of the report containing a summary based on data from the participating districts will be sent to your superintendent to help identify best practices of implementing professional development based off of evaluation and supervision data. There are no costs to you for participating in this study*

*and you will receive no compensation for your participation. At any time during the study, you may decline to answer any question and you may withdraw your participation.*

*The purpose of this study is to examine how Act 82 (Educator Effectiveness Model) has changed the way that districts are performing the functions of evaluation and supervision. Specifically, I want to explore how the legislation has changed the frequency of supervision, the protocols relating to supervision (pre-observation and post-observation meetings, examining teacher evidence, including teacher reflections in documentation), the professional language that educators use during the observation and supervision cycle, and the resources and supports educators now use as part of the accountability component of the observation cycle.*

*Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me by phone at 724-244-5070 or by email at [jason.boone@bellevernonarea.net](mailto:jason.boone@bellevernonarea.net). . If you would like to speak to my advisor, Dr. Cynthia Tananis, she can be reached at 412-648-7171 or through email at [tananis@pitt.edu](mailto:tananis@pitt.edu). I appreciate your interest and look forward to hearing from you.*

**1. Position:**

- Principal (1)
- Assistant/Vice Principal (2)
- Director of Curriculum (3)
- Assistant Superintendent (4)
- Superintendent (5)
- Human Resource Director (6)
- Other (7)

**2. Years of experience as a school administrator:** \_\_\_\_\_

*3. Please describe the type(s) of training you have had relative to Act 82 (Educator Effectiveness Project). Please complete the following matrix to indicate the number of trainings you have had. Then, reflect on the overall usefulness of all of the meetings or trainings combined. For instance, if you attended one training that was not useful at all, but two others that were extremely useful, on average, how USEFUL were all of those meetings and/or trainings combined related to your professional growth:*

	How Many?	Extremely Useful (1)	Useful (2)	Not Useful At All (3)	Did Not Attend (4)
PDE Trainings (1)		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Intermediate Unit Trainings (2)		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
District Level Trainings (3)		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Building Level Trainings (4)		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other Trainings (5)		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*4. Have you conducted Educator Effectiveness Model trainings?*

	Answer (1)	How Many?
Yes, with other school administrators (1)	<input type="radio"/>	
Yes, with teachers (2)	<input type="radio"/>	
No (3)	<input type="radio"/>	N/A

*5. Has the Educator Effectiveness Model changed the supervision and evaluation practices in your district?*

Yes (1)

No (2)

If No Is selected, then skip to Question 8

**6. For each descriptor below, please identify which of these behaviors has changed in your district since the passage of Act 82:**

	Significantly Less (1)	Moderately Less (2)	No change (4)	Moderately More (6)	Significantly More (7)
The amount of <u>time</u> delegated to supervision and evaluation (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The amount of <u>duties</u> relating to supervision and evaluation (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The <u>priority of the process</u> in which evaluations are conducted (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The <u>discussions</u> that are occurring relating to professional practice (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The amount of <u>reflection</u> between administrators and teachers relative to professional practice (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The <u>effort</u> of teachers in addition to their teaching responsibilities (SLO's, Reflections, Ratings on Rubrics, etc) (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**7. If you answered “Significantly Less”, “Moderately Less”, “Moderately More”, or “Significantly More”, please explain exactly what has changed in your district.**

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**8. How has the level of stress changed in your district since the passage of Act 82:**

	Significantly Less (1)	Moderately Less (2)	No change (4)	Moderately More (6)	Significantly More (7)
Stress levels of <b><u>teachers</u></b> relative to the new legislation (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Stress levels of <b><u>administrators</u></b> relative to the new legislation (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**9. If you answered “Significantly Less”, “Moderately Less”, “Moderately More”, or “Significantly More”, please explain exactly what has changed in your district.**

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For questions 10 and 11, please use the following definition of a differentiated supervision plan in order to appropriately answers the questions:

*“In a differentiated supervision plan, professional employees develop an action plan for professional development and evaluation unique to their needs and interests instead of participation in a traditional observation cycle.”*

**10. Did your district have a differentiated supervision plan prior to the passage of Act 82?**

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No is selected, then skip to Question 12

**11. If you selected yes, please describe your differentiated supervision plan:**

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**12. Did your district create a differentiated supervision plan since the passage of Act 82?**

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No is selected, then skip to Question 14

**13. If you selected yes, please describe your differentiated supervision plan:**

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**14. Are there plans in your district to create a differentiated supervision plan to help manage the time required of the Educator Effectiveness Model mandates?**

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

**15. Please check if your district has implemented the following:**

- A new position focused primarily on the responsibility to monitor Teacher Evaluation and Supervision (1)
- Added responsibilities of current administrators to monitor Teacher Evaluation and Supervision (2)
- Other (3) \_\_\_\_\_

**16. Is training relative to the Educator Effectiveness Model part of your Teacher Induction Program:**

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No is selected, then skip to Question 18

**17. If you selected yes, please describe how Act 82 training is included as part of your Teacher Induction Program:**

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**18. Does your district use any type of software program to help facilitate the evaluation and supervision processes?**

- Yes (Please Name the Type of Software) (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- No (2)

**19. Does your district analyze observation and evaluation data to identify areas of strength and necessary growth of the teaching staff?**

- Yes, all of the schools follow this practice. (1)
- Yes, only some of the schools follow this practice. (2)
- No, none of the schools follow this practice. (3)

If None is selected, then skip to Question 21

**20. Please describe how your administrators use observation and evaluation data to identify areas of strength and areas of growth of the teaching staff:**

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**21. Do the teachers have any input in deciding which areas they need to improve upon?**

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If None is selected, then skip to Question 23

**22. If so, how?**

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**23. Does the district offer or send teachers to professional development workshops based on evaluation results?**

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If None is selected, then skip to Question 25

**24. Please choose the following ways professional development is offered at your district:**

**Please check all that apply.**

	Outside of the district workshops, seminars, or courses, taken individually (1)	Outside of the district workshops, seminars, or courses, taken as part of a group (2)	In-District workshops, seminars, or courses, taken individually (3)	In-District workshops, seminars, or courses, taken as part of a group (4)	Online webinars or courses (5)
Teachers are <u>asked, but not required,</u> to participate in certain activities based on evaluation results (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teachers are <u>required</u> to attend professional development activities and workshops based on evaluation results (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**25. Do the teachers have to provide evidence of improvement in the classroom relative to information or practices gathered from professional development opportunities?**

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

**26. Who facilitates your professional development activities? Select all that apply.**

- Outside Vendors (1)
- Central Office Administrators (2)
- Teachers (3)
- Intermediate Unit Staff (4)
- Online Activities (5)
- Other: (Please Describe) (6) \_\_\_\_\_

***27. If you could change your professional development offerings and protocols, how would you like your district to handle professional development in relating to data gathered from the evaluation and supervision process?***

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***28. Is there anything else you would like to add in relation to Act 82 and professional development related to evaluation and supervision processes?***

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## **APPENDIX E**

### **Union Leadership Survey Questions**

#### ***Act 82 – Teacher Evaluation and Supervision Aligned to Professional Development Needs Survey***

*Thank you for choosing to participate in the Act 82 – Teacher Evaluation and Supervision Aligned to Professional Development Needs study. You will need to complete an on-line survey that will last between 15-30 minutes. You can take this survey any time that is convenient for you. For those of you that do not feel comfortable participating in an on-line format, you are welcome to contact me for a standard mail survey, a face-to-face interview, or a phone interview. Your answers will be recorded and transcribed for data analysis purposes.*

*Any risk you may incur through the completion of this study would be minimal. All records pertaining to your involvement in this study will be kept confidential. Your identity will not be revealed in any description or publication of the research. An overview of the report containing a summary of all of the participating districts will be sent to your superintendent to help identify best practices of implementing professional development based off of evaluation and supervision data. There are no costs to you for participating in this study and you will receive no compensation for your participation. At any time during the study, you may decline to answer any question and you may withdraw your participation.*

*The purpose of this study is to examine how Act 82 (Educator Effectiveness Model) has changed the way that districts are performing the functions of evaluation and supervision. Specifically, I want to explore your perceptions **as a union president** in relation to how the legislation has changed the frequency of supervision, the protocols relating to supervision (pre-observation and post-observation meetings, examining teacher evidence, including teacher reflections in documentation), the professional language that educators use during the observation and supervision cycle, and the resources and supports educators now use as part of the accountability component of the observation cycle.*

*Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me by phone at 724-244-5070 or by email at [jab328@pitt.edu](mailto:jab328@pitt.edu). If you would like to speak to my advisor, Dr. Cynthia Tananis, she can be reached at 412-648-7171 or through email at [tananis@pitt.edu](mailto:tananis@pitt.edu). I appreciate your interest and look forward to hearing from you.*

**1. Building level:**

- Primary/Elementary (1)
- Middle/Junior High (2)
- High School (4)

**2. Years of experience as a teacher: \_\_\_\_\_**

**3. Years of experience in a union leadership role: \_\_\_\_\_**

**4. How many years has your district been implementing Act 82? \_\_\_\_\_**

**5. Please describe the type(s) of training that teachers in your district have had relative to Act 82 (Educator Effectiveness Model). Indicate the level of usefulness for each type that teachers have reported.**

	Extremely Useful (1)	Useful (2)	Not Useful At All (3)	Did Not Attend (4)	Have Not Received Teacher Feedback (5)
PDE Trainings (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Intermediate Unit Trainings (2)	○	○	○	○	○
District Level Trainings (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Building Level Trainings (4)	○	○	○	○	○
PSEA/AFT Trainings (5)	○	○	○	○	○
Other Trainings (6)	○	○	○	○	○

**6. Has your district's union leadership been specifically trained on the Educator Effectiveness Model through any of the following methods? Please check all that apply.**

- No specific training has been reported
- PDE Trainings
- Intermediate Unit Trainings
- District Level Trainings
- Building Level Trainings
- PSEA/AFT Trainings
- Other Trainings

**7. Has the union offered trainings for teachers?**

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

***8. Did your district's union leadership work with the district's administrative team to plan the implementation of the Educator Effectiveness Model?***

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No is selected, then skip to Question 10

***9. Please explain how your district's union leadership worked with the district's administrative team to plan the implementation of the Educator Effectiveness Model.***

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***10. Do teachers in your district believe the administrators in your district have been adequately trained to implement the Educator Effectiveness Model?***

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- I don't know how most teachers regard this (3)

**11. For each descriptor below, please identify which of these behaviors teachers indicate has changed in your district since the passage of Act 82:**

	Significantly Less (1)	Moderately Less (2)	No change (3)	Moderately More (4)	Significantly More (5)
The amount of <u>time</u> teachers spend related to supervision and evaluation (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The amount of <u>administrative duties</u> relating to supervision and evaluation (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The <u>discussions</u> that are occurring relating to professional practice (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The amount of <u>reflection</u> between administrators and teachers relative to professional practice (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The <u>concern</u> of teachers in addition to their teaching responsibilities (SLO's, Reflections, Ratings on Rubrics, etc) (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The <u>frequency</u> in which an administrator is in a classroom (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The <u>frequency</u> in which an administrator discusses instructional practice with a teacher (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**12. From your perspective as a union leader, how has the level of stress changed in your district since the passage of Act 82:**

	Significantly Less (1)	Moderately Less (2)	No change (3)	Moderately More (4)	Significantly More (5)
Stress levels of <b><u>teachers</u></b> relative to the new legislation (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Stress levels of <b><u>administrators</u></b> relative to the new legislation (2)	○	○	○	○	○

**13. From your perspective as a union leader, how has the frequency of discussion regarding instructional practices between the district's administrative team and teachers changed in your district since the passage of Act 82:**

	Significantly Less (1)	Moderately Less (2)	No change (3)	Moderately More (4)	Significantly More (5)
The frequency of discussions relative to <b><u>instructional practices</u></b> outlined in the Educator Effectiveness Model (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The frequency of discussions relative to <b><u>observed deficiencies</u></b> outlined in the Educator Effectiveness Model (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The frequency of discussions relative to <b><u>observed distinguished behaviors</u></b> outlined in the Educator Effectiveness Model (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The frequency of discussions relative to <b><u>professional development based on the 22 components</u></b> of the Charlotte Danielson's <i>Framework for Teaching</i> utilized in the Educator Effectiveness Model (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**14. Have teachers expressed improvement in their instructional practices based on Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching utilized in the Educator Effectiveness Model?**

- Yes, teachers have expressed improvement or limited improvement (1)
- No, teachers have expressed no improvement (2)
- I do not know of teacher input related to this issue

If "No" or "I don't know" is selected, then skip to Question 16

**15. In what ways?**

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**16. Have teachers reported that the implementation of Act 82's evaluation and supervision policies and protocols have had a negative impact on their teaching?**

- Yes, teachers have expressed a negative impact on their teaching due to Act 82 (1)
- No, teachers have not expressed a negative impact on their teaching due to Act 82 (2)
- I do not know of teacher input related to this issue

If No is selected, then skip to Question 18

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**17. In what ways?**

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**18. Does your district collect observation and evaluation data to identify areas of strength and areas of growth of the teaching staff in order to plan for professional development topics?**

- Yes, all of the schools follow this practice. (1)
- Yes, only some of the schools follow this practice. (2)
- No, none of the schools follow this practice. (3)
- I don't know (4)

If None is selected, then skip to Question 20

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**19. Please describe how your administrators use observation and evaluation data to identify areas of strength and areas of growth of the teaching staff:**

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**20. Are summative evaluation and supervision data analyzed and discussed during any type of faculty meetings?**

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No is selected, then skip to Question 22

**21. Please explain how summative evaluation and supervision data are analyzed and discussed during faculty meetings:**

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**22. Do your district's teachers have any input in deciding what type of professional development activities they can participate in?**

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

**23. Do your district's teachers have any input in deciding what areas they need to improve upon?**

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

**24. Please indicate the following ways in which professional development is offered at your district: Select all that apply.**

	Outside of the district workshops, seminars, or courses, taken individually (1)	Outside of the district workshops, seminars, or courses, taken as part of a group (2)	In-District workshops, seminars, or courses, taken individually (3)	In-District workshops, seminars, or courses, taken as part of a group (4)	Online webinars or courses (5)
Teachers are <u>asked, but not required</u> to participate in certain activities based on evaluation results (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teachers are <u>required</u> to attend professional development activities and workshops based on evaluation results (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**25. Who facilitates your district's professional development activities? Select all that apply.**

- Outside Vendors (1)
- Central Office Administrators (2)
- Teachers (3)
- Intermediate Unit Staff (4)
- Online Activities (5)
- Principals (6)
- PaTTAN Staff (7)
- Higher Education Personnel (8)
- Other: (Please Describe) (9) \_\_\_\_\_

**26. Please convey the position you believe your district's teachers hold regarding how professional development activities are driven by results from the most recent end-of-year evaluations:**

	Strongly Agree (1)	Agree (2)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly Disagree (5)
Professional development activities should be directly related to the results of the evaluation and ongoing supervision process (1)	<input type="radio"/>				
Administrators are capable of identifying professional development activities that correlate to the results of the evaluation and ongoing supervision process (2)	<input type="radio"/>				

**27. If you could change your professional development offerings and protocols, how would you like your district to handle professional development related to data gathered from the evaluation and supervision process?**

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**28. Is there anything else you would like to add in relation to Act 82 and Professional Development related to evaluation and supervision processes?**

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Thank you for participating in this survey. Your input will add to the body of knowledge relating to the implementation of Act 82 and how this implementation is affecting evaluation and supervision practices and protocols in Southwestern Pennsylvania. You will receive a summary report of the findings at the conclusion of the study. Thank you again for your participation and support in this study.

## APPENDIX F

<i><b>Study Question</b></i>	<i><b>Data Source</b></i>	<i><b>Data That Emerges</b></i>	<i><b>Relevance</b></i>	<i><b>Plan for Analysis</b></i>	<i><b>Correlation to Literature</b></i>
<i><b>How has the Educator Effectiveness Model influenced the way selected school districts in Southwestern Pennsylvania have implemented or managed their teacher evaluation and supervision processes?</b></i>	Administrator Survey  Questions Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4, Q5, Q6, Q7, Q8, Q9, Q10, Q11, Q12, Q13, Q14, Q15, Q16, Q17, Q18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administrative experience</li> <li>• Position</li> <li>• Training experience</li> <li>• Analysis of evaluation, supervision and professional development practices and protocols</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides the baseline to analyze how Act 82 has changed the practices in the district</li> <li>• Helps to clarify the supports in place for districts of varying size</li> <li>• Helps to provide insight into the depth of training opportunities available to all staff members relative to Act 82</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measures of central tendency</li> <li>• Frequency distributions</li> <li>• Charts and graphs</li> <li>• Comparison of responses from schools based on enrollment</li> <li>• Comparison of responses from schools based on per-pupil expenditures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 2010</li> <li>• Danielson, 2007</li> <li>• Garman, 1986</li> <li>• Garrett, 2011</li> <li>• Goldstein &amp; Noguera, 2006</li> <li>• Hill, 2009</li> <li>• Kachur, Stout, &amp; Edwards, 2013</li> <li>• Knoff, 1988</li> <li>• Liu &amp; Zhao, 2013</li> <li>• Looney, 2011</li> <li>• Nolan &amp; Huber, 1989</li> <li>• Knoff, 1988</li> <li>• Pajak, 1986</li> <li>• Ponticell &amp; Zepeda, 2004</li> <li>• Sergiovanni, 1985</li> <li>• Taut, Santelices, Araya, &amp; Manzi, 2010</li> <li>• The New Teacher Project, 2010</li> <li>• Toch, 2008</li> </ul>
	Union President Survey  Questions Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4, Q5, Q6, Q7, Q8, Q9, Q10, Q11, Q12, Q13, Q14, Q15, Q16, Q17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Union leadership experience</li> <li>• Training experience</li> <li>• Union presidents' views about teachers' perception of evaluation, supervision and professional development practices and protocols</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides the baseline to analyze how the union presidents perceive teachers' beliefs on whether or not Act 82 has changed the practices in the district</li> <li>• Gives insight into the union presidents' beliefs about teacher's perceptions relative to Act 82 trainings and importance in the district</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measures of central tendency</li> <li>• Frequency distributions</li> <li>• Charts and graphs</li> <li>• Comparison of responses from schools based on enrollment</li> <li>• Comparison of responses from schools based on per-pupil expenditures</li> </ul>	

**Table 11 - Survey Questions and Methodology Study - Question 1**

## APPENDIX G

<b><i>Study Question</i></b>	<b><i>Data Source</i></b>	<b><i>Data That Emerges</i></b>	<b><i>Relevance</i></b>	<b><i>Plan for Analysis</i></b>	<b><i>Correlation to Literature</i></b>
<b><i>How do selected Southwestern Pennsylvania School Districts offer professional development correlated to evaluation and supervision plans?</i></b>	Administrator Survey Questions Q1, Q2, Q3, Q10, Q11, Q12, Q13, Q14, Q16, Q17, Q18, Q19, Q20, Q21, Q22, Q23, Q24, Q25, Q26, Q27, Q28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of a district's differentiated supervision plan</li> <li>• Evaluation and supervision data</li> <li>• Professional development plans</li> <li>• Administrative responsibility for evaluation and supervision data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarifies which districts have mandatory professional development components based on evaluation and supervision data</li> <li>• Provides administrative perspective on teacher input into professional growth and professional development and mandating professional development using evaluation and supervision data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequency distributions</li> <li>• Comparison of responses between school administrators and teachers as a whole, and by district</li> <li>• Cross tabulation of responses based on enrollment and per-pupil expenditure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avalos, 2011</li> <li>• Collinson, Kozina, Lin, Ling, Matheson, Newcombe, &amp; Zogla, 2009</li> <li>• Danielson, 2007</li> <li>• Dixon, Yssel, McConnell, &amp; Hardin, 2014</li> <li>• Hermans, Kalz, &amp; Koper, 2013</li> <li>• Jovanova-Mitkovska, 2010</li> <li>• Little, 1993</li> <li>• Liu, 2012</li> <li>• Lumpe, 2007</li> <li>• McNergney &amp; Francis, 1986</li> <li>• Merli, 2011</li> <li>• Roseler &amp; Dentzau, 2013</li> <li>• Schrum, 1999</li> <li>• Tuyten &amp; Devos, 2011</li> <li>• Van Driel &amp; Berry, 2012</li> <li>• Wayne, Yoon, Zhu, Cronen, &amp; Garet, 2008</li> <li>• Zandi, Thang, &amp; Krish, 2014</li> </ul>
	Union President Survey Questions Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4, Q18, Q19, Q20, Q21, Q22, Q23, Q24, Q25, Q26, Q27, Q28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Union presidents' perceptions of teachers' beliefs about professional development plans</li> <li>• Analysis of union presidents' perceptions on the evaluation and supervision processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides an analysis of how teachers perceive the evaluation and supervision processes in the district</li> <li>• Clarifies whether or not union presidents can gauge teachers' beliefs about whether professional development should be aligned with observed evidence from evaluation and supervision data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequency distributions</li> <li>• Comparison of responses between school administrators and teachers as a whole</li> <li>• Cross tabulation of responses based on enrollment and per-pupil expenditure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>

**Table 12 - Survey Questions and Methodology Study - Question 2**

## APPENDIX H

<i>Study Question</i>	<i>Data Source</i>	<i>Data That Emerges</i>	<i>Relevance</i>	<i>Plan for Analysis</i>	<i>Correlation to Literature</i>
<i>How do union leaders in Southwestern Pennsylvania School Districts perceive the implementation of the Educator Effectiveness Model and its impact on teacher performance?</i>	Administrator Survey Questions Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4, Q5, Q6, Q7, Q8, Q9, Q27, Q28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administrative perceptions</li> <li>• Instructional analysis</li> <li>• Knowledge of the Educator Effectiveness Model</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides a baseline of administrative perceptions to compare against union president perceptions</li> <li>• Helps to provide recommendations for how to properly implement the mandates of Act 82 in order to improve instruction</li> <li>• Clarifies how districts align Act 82 mandates to professional growth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measures of central tendency</li> <li>• Frequency distributions</li> <li>• Comparison of responses from schools based on enrollment</li> <li>• Comparison of responses from schools based on per-pupil expenditures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avalos, 2011</li> <li>• Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 2010</li> <li>• Butler &amp; Schnellert, 2012</li> <li>• Danielson, 2007</li> <li>• Dubinsky, Roehrig, &amp; Varma, 2013</li> <li>• Garrett, 2011</li> <li>• Hill, 2009</li> <li>• Holyoke &amp; Larson, 2009</li> <li>• Jovanova-Mitkovska, 2010</li> <li>• Kirkwood &amp; Christie, 2006</li> <li>• Knoff, 1988</li> <li>• Little, 1993</li> <li>• Merli, 2011</li> <li>• Nolan &amp; Huber, 1989</li> <li>• Scanlon &amp; Schmitz, 2001</li> <li>• The New Teacher Project, 2010</li> </ul>
	Union President Surveys Questions Q1, Q2, Q3, Q13, Q14, Q15, Q16, Q17, Q26, Q27, Q28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Union president perceptions on the impact the Educator Effectiveness Model</li> <li>• Knowledge of the Educator Effectiveness Model</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides a baseline of union president perceptions to compare against administrative perceptions</li> <li>• Helps to provide recommendations for how to properly implement the mandates of Act 82 in order to improve instruction</li> <li>• Clarifies how districts align Act 82 mandates to professional growth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measures of central tendency</li> <li>• Frequency distributions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knoff, 1988</li> <li>• Little, 1993</li> <li>• Merli, 2011</li> <li>• Nolan &amp; Huber, 1989</li> <li>• Scanlon &amp; Schmitz, 2001</li> <li>• The New Teacher Project, 2010</li> </ul>

**Table 13 - Survey Questions and Methodology Study - Question 3**

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