

**MIDDLE LEVEL TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE VALUE AND UTILITY OF  
EVALUATIVE FEEDBACK: AN ACTION RESEARCH STUDY TO SUPPORT A  
CULTURE OF SUPERVISION AND INSTRUCTIONAL CHANGE**

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This action research study examined teacher perceptions of evaluative feedback. This study had three main purposes. The first purpose was to investigate the value and utilization of evaluative feedback on the pedagogical practices of middle school teachers and the possibility of effecting change in the classroom setting through the refinement of the evaluative feedback that is provided to middle school teachers. The second purpose of this study was to understand the aspects of evaluative feedback which aid in the establishment of a culture of supervision. The third purpose was to explore the potential development of a reflective professional development activity which informs the practice of teachers and administrators.

The need for this specific research is evident as teacher evaluation models have shifted over the past decade in Pennsylvania. Accordingly, this study sought to provide insight to school leaders who desire to improve the culture of supervision that exists within schools. Ultimately, this study adds to the scholarly conversation about evaluative feedback, as well as the ongoing discussions around cultures of supervision that exist in school settings. This study represents the first iteration of an ongoing action research cycle which will be conducted by the researcher.

The initial conclusions from this cycle inform the next iteration of the research cycle and the researcher's practice as a middle school principal.

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Second only to family background, the quality of a classroom teacher is the most important factor in a student's ability to learn (Alvarez & Anderson-Ketchmark, 2011; Wechsler & Shields, 2008). Schools cannot alter a child's family background, which underlines the importance of having a high-quality teacher in every classroom. One way to develop teachers so that they become high-quality teachers that students need is to give them useful feedback during observations. Providing teachers with descriptive and constructive evaluative feedback of their teaching practices is of critical importance to helping teachers develop high-quality instructional practices. Some teacher evaluation systems and school administrators, however, have fallen short in their capacity to provide teachers with constructive evaluative feedback on pedagogical practices (Feeney, 2007; Frase, 1992). Understanding the nature of evaluative feedback and the perceptions that teachers have of evaluative feedback informs the practice of teachers and the practice of those who are charged with providing teachers with evaluative feedback.

### **1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Having served as both a teacher and an administrator within Pennsylvania's public school system, my instructional practices have been evaluated by school administrators, and I have been charged with providing teachers with evaluative feedback on their instructional practices. As a

classroom teacher, the evaluations that I received offered very little in terms of content and constructive feedback. Typically, the evaluation form included a bulleted list of “best instructional practices” that my principal saw in use during the observation. In my experience, checklists and positive affirmation alone will not necessarily bring about improved classroom instruction. In order to improve classroom instruction, teachers need to be provided with constructive evaluative feedback by administrators who are properly trained to provide such feedback (Danielson, 2010; Derrington, 2011; Feeney, 2007; Frase, 1992; Ovando, 2005). In addition, teachers must be prepared to receive and act upon the evaluative feedback with which they are provided (Danielson, 2010; Derrington, 2011; Feeney, 2007; Frase, 1992; Ovando, 2005).

In 2012, the Pennsylvania Legislature signed Act 82 into legislation, which required Pennsylvania’s Secretary of Education and the Pennsylvania Department of Education to establish a standard teacher evaluation system for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (Pennsylvania General Assembly, 2012). Charlotte Danielson’s *Framework for Teaching* (FFT) was selected as the overarching model of effective teaching throughout the Commonwealth (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2015). Further explanation of the FFT is provided in Chapter 2, Section 1, which is entitled, *Evolution of Teacher Evaluation*. Beginning in 2013-2014 school year, the newly devised teacher evaluation system, which was based on Danielson’s framework, was implemented in many public schools across Pennsylvania (Pennsylvania General Assembly, 2012). However, due to collective bargaining agreements that were not set to expire until the summer of 2015, some public school systems in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania were not required to fully implement the new teacher evaluation system until the 2015-2016 school year. Other public school districts piloted the system in 2010 and 2011 (Lane

& Horner, 2011). Needless to say, there are varying degrees of familiarity with and acceptance of the new teacher evaluation system amongst Pennsylvania's teachers and administrators (Lane & Horner, 2011). As Pennsylvania's public school educators grow increasingly familiar with the new evaluation model, the value and utilization of the evaluative feedback that is generated via this evaluation model is in need of further investigation.

## **1.2 PURPOSE**

The purpose of this action research study is to investigate the value and utilization of evaluative feedback on the pedagogical practices of middle school teachers and the possibility of effecting change in the classroom setting through the refinement of the evaluative feedback that is provided to middle school teachers. The findings of this study will assist in the establishment of a culture of supervision in which the capacity of relevant stakeholders to provide and act upon evaluative feedback is further developed and strengthened. Furthermore, the findings of this study may lead to the development of a reflective professional development activity through which an assessment of the value of the evaluative feedback received by teachers informs the practice and process of administrators in providing evaluative feedback to teachers.

## **1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This study gathered information from middle school teachers in an effort to improve the understanding of teachers' perceptions of the evaluative feedback that they receive from school

administrators. This study surveyed both tenured and non-tenured middle school teachers at Eden Middle School in order to better understand their individual perceptions (value and utilization) of evaluative feedback on their pedagogical practices. The specific research questions include:

Q1: To what extent do middle school teachers value the evaluative feedback provided to them by their principal via the Framework for Teaching?

Q2: To what extent do teachers utilize the evaluative feedback provided to them by their principal via the Framework for Teaching?

Q3: What are teacher perceptions of the specific components of the evaluative feedback process that supports instructional change?

#### **1.4 DEFINITION OF TERMS**

The following definitions provide explanations for terms specific to this study.

1. Pennsylvania Value Added Assessment System (PVAAS): A statistical analysis of Pennsylvania System of School Assessment data, and provides districts and their schools with progress data to add to achievement data. This new lens of measuring student learning provides educators with valuable information to ensure they are meeting the academic needs of groups of students, as well as individual students (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2016).
2. Qualtrics: A web-based service that allows for the creation of surveys, the collection and secure storage of data, the analysis of responses, and the presentation of results via professional-quality graphs (Qualtrics Survey Service, 2016).

3. Standards-based Teacher Evaluation System: Evaluation processes based on a clear set of defined standards of effective teaching (Danielson & McGreal, 2000).
4. Teacher Evaluation: The process of determining teacher competence and providing professional growth to teachers in public schools within our country (Rogers & Weems, 2010).
5. Tenure: To gain tenure, an employee (teacher) must serve three years in a school district or intermediate unit as a “temporary professional employee,” have a satisfactory rating during the last four months of the third year, and maintain appropriate certification. When these requirements are met, the employee (teacher) is defined as a “professional employee” and is entitled to a professional contract (Allegheny Intermediate Unit, 2016).

## **1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

This study sought to examine the impact of evaluative feedback on the pedagogical practices of middle school teachers and to inform the practice of administrators in refining evaluative feedback to ensure that the feedback provided to middle school teachers is both valuable and actionable. With the passing of the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) in December of 2015, the previous level of involvement that the federal government had in the licensure and evaluation of teachers (which was minimal) was diminished (ESSA, 2015). Due to this recent shift, the impact of ESSA on individual states is still unfolding. In Pennsylvania specifically, the Educator Evaluation Work Group is working to determine whether or not there are “opportunities to improve the efficiency and effectiveness” of the Framework for Teaching (FFT), while still maintaining teacher accountability measures (PDE, 2015b). Despite these legislative changes,

meaningful evaluative feedback has been shown to positively impact both teaching and learning (Covey, 1991, Danielson, 2002, Frase, 1992, Ovando, 2011, Pajak, 2000). Evaluative feedback generated through a teacher evaluation process, such as the FFT, is an area where positive instructional change may be realized.

## **1.6 SUMMARY**

In Pennsylvania, the Framework for Teaching (FFT) was selected as the tool for conducting teacher observations and evaluations in public schools. When utilized as intended, the FFT can assist administrators in delivering evaluative feedback to teachers that is specific, accurate, valuable, and actionable (Danielson, 2010). Understanding the value placed on evaluative feedback by teachers, as well as the ways in which evaluative feedback is utilized in the planning for and delivery of classroom instruction, informs the practice of school leaders.

Pennsylvania's school leaders are required by law to evaluate the teaching practices of both tenured and untenured teachers. School leaders are responsible for providing teachers with guidance and professional development, while at the same time, holding teachers accountable for students' academic performance on standardized tests. By knowing that school administrators are entrusted with these responsibilities, understanding the impact and influence of evaluative feedback on the instructional practices of teachers may assist school leaders in their efforts to effect change within the classroom setting and may also improve the culture of supervision that exists amongst teachers and school administrators.

## **2.0 REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

This literature review explored the ways in which the evaluation process for Pennsylvania teachers has evolved over the past decade and the characteristics of evaluative feedback that are considered most effective.

The literature review begins by describing the history of teacher evaluation in Pennsylvania. Particular attention is given to Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching (FFT), as it directly informs this research study. An overview of teacher accountability and its connection to teacher evaluation within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is also provided. Then, the literature related to the preparation of school principals to deliver evaluative feedback to teachers is examined.

The second portion of the literature review focuses on the characteristics of effective evaluative feedback. More specifically, this portion of the literature review concentrates on the following: 1) literature that addresses the attributes of effective feedback systems, 2) the relationships between teachers and supervisors as it relates to teacher evaluation, and 3) the features of evaluative feedback that have been identified as most meaningful and impactful to teachers' instructional practices.

## **2.1 EVOLUTION OF TEACHER EVALUATION**

### **2.1.1 A Decade of change: Teacher evaluation**

Teacher evaluation systems serve a multitude of purposes, including the maintenance of high quality classroom instruction, the capacity to identify ineffective teachers in the classroom setting, and the capability to provide constructive feedback to support professional learning and continual growth of teachers (Danielson, 2002; Feeney, 2007). School administrators may leverage a teacher evaluation system to establish and support high-quality instruction in every classroom. The teacher evaluation system utilized by school administrators, therefore, should be valid and objective (Pennsylvania General Assembly, 2012). More importantly, teacher evaluation systems should be designed in such a way as to result in the conveyance of descriptive and constructive feedback to all classroom teachers (Danielson, 2001; Frase, 1992). The outcome of the teacher evaluation process should be a high-quality teacher in every classroom and the implementation of meaningful learning opportunities for all children.

Teacher evaluation processes have not always resulted in constructive evaluative feedback for teachers. Frase (1992) suggested that teacher evaluation ratings have been grossly inflated due to “tenure laws and union contracts that confound the process and obscure the results” and added that the process of teacher evaluation “appears to be mainly ceremonial, with the potential of feedback to improve performance [not being] realized” (pp. 177-178). Frase’s (1992) assessment of the state of teacher evaluation was concerning. He indicated that,

Teacher evaluation has either lost or has never had a purpose. It has become perfunctory. Little energy is invested, and the teacher receives little, if any, constructive feedback for improvement. In too many districts, the only reason for

complying is to meet state requirements. Teachers in many cases have good reasons for holding evaluation and supervision in contempt. Evaluations have not been helpful; evaluators are not trained in curriculum and instruction, and feedback is either absent or of low quality. Most serious of all, they do not result in instructional improvement. (p. 180)

Frase's (1992) assessment spoke to the state of teacher evaluation practices across the United States and underscored the impact of inconsistent evaluative practices on teachers and administrators. Prior to the introduction of the Framework for Teaching (FFT) in Pennsylvania, evaluation processes varied across school districts throughout the Commonwealth. In 2004, the Pennsylvania Department of Education gave school districts a choice in which evaluation rating form to use to evaluate teachers (PDE, 2015a). For many years, the PDE DEBE-5501 (Appendix A) and the PDE 426, PDE 427 and PDE 428 (Appendices B, C, D) Employee Evaluation forms were utilized by school administrators to provide teachers with a rating or evaluation score; however, school districts were also provided the option of creating their own evaluation system which ultimately had to be approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE, 2015a). These three options brought with them their own unique requirements and processes.

The PDE DEBE-5501, which was initiated in 1919, was utilized throughout Pennsylvania well into the 2000s (Calabrese, 2013). The PDE DEBE-5501 Employee Evaluation form was organized into four domains: 1) Personality, 2) Preparation, 3) Technique, and 4) Pupil Reaction (PDE, 2015a). The PDE DEBE-5501 form included guidelines for use; however, only one of the guidelines spoke to the manner in which administrators utilize the evaluation tool:

Using the descriptors listed in each category on the card, the rater will attach a numerical value to the employee's performance in each of the four categories –

Personality, Preparation, Technique and Pupil Reaction – to a maximum numerical value of 20 points per category. The aggregate numerical value will not exceed 80 points when adding the four categories. (PDE, 2005, n.p.). Administrators were required to provide teachers with a numerical score in each of the aforementioned categories after conducting a formal observation of a teacher’s instruction. The scores were tallied and a rating of either “satisfactory” or “unsatisfactory” was then provided to individual teachers (PDE, 2005). The PDE DEBE-5501 form and associated process did not require that any additional feedback be provided to teachers by their administrator, and its design only permitted administrators to give teachers numerical feedback on a bullet-point list of predetermined factors.

Eventually, the PDE DEBE-5501 was replaced by the PDE 426, 427 and 428 forms. These new forms, which were utilized from 2002 until 2014, assisted administrators in the evaluative process for teachers. The PDE 426 form was developed to evaluate semi-annual employees, or teachers who had not yet achieved tenure in Pennsylvania (PDE, 2004a). The PDE 427 form was developed to evaluate teachers who were working towards earning their Instructional II certification (PDE, 2004a). The PDE 428 form was developed to evaluate those teachers who had earned their Instructional II certification (PDE, 2004a). Each of the forms were aligned to the four domains of teaching responsibility identified by Charlotte Danielson: 1) Planning and Preparation, 2) Classroom Environment, 3) Instruction, and 4) Professional Responsibilities (Danielson Group, 2013; PDE, 2015a). The PDE 426, 427 and 428 forms left the evaluation of instruction up to the judgement of individual administrator’s interpretation of evidence that he or she collected over the course of a school year (PDE, 2004b). The evidence collected by administrators was compared to a bullet-point list of possible evidence. This list of

potential evidence was compiled by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE, 2004b).

Like the PDE DEBE-5501, the evaluation process associated with the PDE 426, 427 and 428 forms did not include a pre-conference, post-conference, and collaborative rating of instructional effectiveness conducted by both the teacher and the administrator. After interpreting the evidence and making a judgment on the performance of individual teachers, administrators assigned teachers with a rating of either “satisfactory” or “unsatisfactory.” The PDE 426, 427 and 428 process did require administrators to provide a written justification for their evaluation rating and permitted administrators to conduct an observation and provide written feedback, but this process did not necessarily foster professional discourse between administrators and teachers related to the art of teaching.

Despite the existence of the PDE DEBE-5501 and the PDE 426, 427 and 428 forms, school districts were not required to use these forms as a part of the teacher evaluation process. The use of these forms was encouraged by PDE, but individual school districts reserved the right to create unique evaluation teacher evaluation systems (PDE, 2004a). These home-grown evaluation systems had to be submitted to PDE for review and approval prior to actual implementation (PDE, 2015d; Pennsylvania Keys to Quality, 2004).

Teacher evaluation processes in Pennsylvania changed after the passage of Act 82 of 2012. Under Act 82 of 2012, school districts still had the option of creating their own teacher evaluation tool, which required approval from PDE (Pennsylvania General Assembly, 2012). However, school districts were encouraged to utilize Danielson’s Framework for Teaching (FFT) as a basis for teacher evaluation. A new evaluation form, PDE 82-1, was created in conjunction with the adoption of the FFT (Appendix E). The FFT relies on a highly-structured evaluation process, a detailed rubric, and the incorporation of additional data points to justify the overall

evaluation/rating of individual teachers (Danielson Group, 2013). The FFT requires that teachers and administrators participate in a pre-conference, formal observation, and a post-conference. The post-conference includes a point-by-point discussion of a four-page rubric, the acknowledgement of best practices, and recommendations for improvement provided to teachers by school leaders.

The intent of the FFT is to bring about improved classroom instruction through the development of robust evaluative feedback and professional dialogue (Danielson Group, 2013). However, Act 82 also frames the FFT as a means for removing ineffective teachers from the classroom setting after two “unsatisfactory” ratings over the course of a ten-year period (Pennsylvania General Assembly, 2012). The FFT is comprised of a research-based set of components of instruction, which is situated within a constructivist view of learning and teaching (Danielson Group, 2013). The components are aligned to the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium standards (INTASC) (Danielson Group, 2013). The 22 components are further subdivided into 76 smaller elements, and these elements are clustered into four domains of teaching responsibility (Danielson Group, 2013). The four domains of teaching responsibility include: 1) Planning and Preparation, 2) Classroom Environment, 3) Instruction, and 4) Professional Responsibilities (The Danielson Group, 2013). Proper implementation of the FFT can foster professional conversations amongst teachers and administrators about teaching, learning, and sound pedagogical practices (Danielson, 2010).

Danielson’s Framework for Teaching was created by Charlotte Danielson in 1996 (Danielson, 1996). This framework, which is based on Danielson’s research, enables schools to implement a consistent process for evaluating the effectiveness of teachers and has also been shown to correlate with student growth (Kane, Taylor, Tyler & Wooten, 2010; Taylor & Tyler,

2011). Danielson's framework has been generally accepted within the realm of public education. Danielson has become an internationally renowned expert in teacher effectiveness and professional learning. Danielson has served as a teacher, administrator, curriculum director, and college professor (Yaple, 2012). While there have been some teacher unions that have questioned the Framework for Teaching and its ability to accurately assess effective teaching across all classrooms, Sweeley (2004) found that a majority of teachers responded positively to all four domains of Danielson's Framework for Teaching. In Pennsylvania, specifically, Sweeley (2004) found that teachers believed that the FFT was effective in both increasing student achievement and moving teachers to pursue new instructional strategies through professional development opportunities.

Conceptually, Danielson's FFT has shifted the manner in which principals and teachers engage with one another in the evaluation process. Sartain, Stoelinga, & Brown (2011) found that the principals and teachers who utilized the FFT as the guiding framework for evaluation reported more meaningful conversations about instruction when compared to previous evaluation frameworks. While principals and teachers described feeling engaged and positive about the process associated with the FFT, there are indications that both groups need to learn more about translating the rating on the instructional rubric into "deep conversation" that will improve classroom instruction (Sartain et al., 2011, p. 41). Essentially, the shift towards an evidence-based teacher evaluation system requires more from the principal and the teacher. Principals must allocate more time to "conducting, analyzing, and discussing observations of instructional practice," while teachers must conceptualize their teaching as "constantly evolving, open to scrutiny, and in need of tweaking and improvement" (Sartain et al., 2011, p. 42).

### **2.1.2 Teacher accountability and evaluation**

The *Every Student Succeeds Act* of 2015 (ESSA) replaced the *No Child Left Behind Act* of 2001. ESSA eliminated federal oversight of how teachers are evaluated (Every Student Succeeds Act, 2015). Under Act 82 of 2012, state-level requirements in Pennsylvania linked teacher evaluation to student performance on standardized tests (Pennsylvania General Assembly, 2012). Because of legislation such as Act 82 of 2012, K-12 public schools have shifted towards teacher evaluation systems that are comprehensive, that link constructive evaluative feedback to improved classroom instruction, and that ultimately result in continued professional growth for teachers (Ovando, 2001).

One may assume that the focus on teacher accountability, the stringent evaluation process, and the objective rubric employed by the FFT would result in an increased number of teachers being identified as ineffective within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. However, data collected by the Pennsylvania Department of Education indicated that the FFT has resulted in even more teachers being deemed “satisfactory” on their end-of-year evaluation reports (PDE, 2015d). The data collected included teacher evaluation surveys from school districts, career and technical centers, intermediate units and charter schools from the 2013-2014 school year, which was the first year that the FFT was widely implemented in Pennsylvania. As Table 1 indicates, 98.3% of all teachers in Pennsylvania earned a “satisfactory” rating between 2013-2014 (PDE Teachers and Administrators, 2015). When compared to the evaluation reports collected between 2009-2010 and 2012-2013, data indicated that more teachers are being categorized as “satisfactory” under the new system than when the PDE DEBE-5501 and/or PDE 426, 427 and 428 evaluation forms were the main methods of evaluation (PDE, 2015d). Between 2009-2010, 96.8% of teachers in Pennsylvania were rated “satisfactory.” Data also indicated that during

each of the three following school years (2010-11, 2011-12, and 2012-13), 97.7% of teachers in Pennsylvania were deemed “satisfactory” in their performance (PDE, 2015d).

**Table 1. Teacher Evaluation Survey Results. Adapted from Pennsylvania Department of Education, Teachers and Administrators (2015)**

<b>School Year</b>	<b>Number of Teachers Rated</b>	<b>% of Teachers Rated “Satisfactory”</b>	<b>% of Teachers Rated “Unsatisfactory”</b>	<b>% of Teachers Not Rated</b>
2009-2010	133,240	96.8%	.6%	2.6%
2010-2011	136,522	97.7%	.5%	1.8%
2011-2012	129,110	97.7%	.5%	1.8%
2012-2013	123, 201	97.7%	.7%	1.6%
2013-2014	118,335	98.3%	.2%	1.5%

While the “satisfactory” ratings are perhaps inflated under each evaluation system utilized in Pennsylvania over the past decade, one could argue that the process of evaluation itself is becoming more consistent across the Commonwealth since the adoption of both Act 82 of 2012 and the FFT. This consistency stems from the use of the FFT by nearly every school district in Pennsylvania, the dissolution of outdated evaluation assessments tools (e.g. PDE DEBE and PDE 426, 427 and 428), and training on the FFT provided by Pennsylvania’s network of Intermediate Units. That being said, variations in the level of training that administrators have received through their respective Intermediate Units is to be expected, simply based on the varying degrees of quality and experience of those providing administrators with training. Therefore, inconsistency in the manner through which administrators evaluate and rate teachers may exist from school district to school district, or even within the same school building, given

the fact that there are multiple administrators responsible for conducting teacher evaluations in every school district and in many school buildings across Pennsylvania.

Consistency aside, the teacher evaluation survey data focuses attention on the new teacher evaluation system. It is easy to question how so many of Pennsylvania's teachers could be "satisfactory," while many of Pennsylvania's students and schools are failing to perform at a level of proficiency on state assessments. In some regards, this criticism is fair. By blindly accepting the relationship between effective teaching and increased test scores, however, something is missing. By failing to address what is valued most in education, legislators are equating teacher effectiveness with a teacher's impact on test scores (Gabriel & Allington, 2012). Gabriel and Allington (2012) argued that educators should focus on the authenticity of tasks and assessments and asked themselves the following questions: "Are students experiencing the education we hope for them? How do we know? If some are not, how can we help?" (p. 49). Perhaps education is the victim of the system that has been created. Does this system help to better prepare children for the world in which they will live? Gabriel and Allington (2012) do not think so:

If your school values creating a democratic citizenry, supporting children's socio-emotional needs, or helping students read the world (Friere & Macedo, 1987) not just the word (or nonsense word, in the case of some current progress monitoring), then we may need another \$45 million. Neither lists of indicators nor the so-called gold standard of value-added data measure those things. Moreover, a set of multiple measures designed to correlate with test scores doesn't keep such goals in sight. (p. 49)

Legislative changes, such as the *Every Student Succeeds Act* and Act 82 of 2012, are

shaping the process through with educators are evaluated. The legislation calls for teacher accountability through the use of a standard evaluation model across Pennsylvania. The implementation of the Framework for Teaching in Pennsylvania has resulted in both consistency across the state, in terms of evaluative practices, and a heightened focus on the relationship between teaching effectiveness and standardized test scores.

### **2.1.3 Principal preparation**

A review of the literature surrounding teacher evaluation and evaluative feedback has emphasized the importance of the role of the school principal and the ability of the school principal to provide feedback to teachers (Frase, 1992; Khachatryan, 2015; Ovando, 2003; Ovando, 2005). Frase (1992) suggested that teacher evaluation systems, supervision programs, and personnel are doing an inadequate job of providing feedback and training that teachers need in order to improve their instruction. A study conducted by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Innovation and Improvement (2004) reported that the most effective school principals are those who demonstrate competency in providing high-quality feedback to teachers in an effort to improve classroom instructional practices. Relatedly, Khachatryan (2015) suggested that school leadership preparation programs should focus on instructional leadership if the expectation of school leaders is to provide teachers with feedback that is known to be effective. If school administrators are expected to provide precise, meaningful feedback to teachers, there is an obvious need to focus attention on the preparation of school administrators to deliver meaningful evaluative feedback to teachers (Khachatryan, 2015, Ovando 2005; U.S. Department of Education Office of Innovation and Improvement, 2004).

Freiberg and Waxman (1988) suggested that written feedback that is provided to teachers

can influence the instructional practices of teachers. Ovando (2003) and Glickman, Gordan & Ross-Gordan (2005) reported that constructive feedback should be aligned with the goals, objectives, instructional strategies, and should be appropriate to the individual teacher's stage of development as a professional. Glickman, et al. (2005) pointed out that "teachers function at different stages of cognitive, conceptual, morale, and ego development and at different stages of consciousness and concern (p. 71). Ovando (2003) indicated that principals need to adhere to specific process steps in order to affect classroom instruction. First, principals must set a climate of respect and trust between themselves and the teachers with whom they work. Ovando (2003) suggested that principals get to know each teacher as a person and as a professional, not simply as an employee. Setting a climate of respect and trust and getting to know one another will take a commitment of both time and effort from principal and teacher. When it comes time for an evaluation, Ovando (2003) recommended that the principal and the teacher work together to clarify expectations for performance through collaboration and understanding. As the principal conducts a classroom observation, they should collect pertinent classroom performance data. The data may be categorized via a pre-established framework or rubric. Once the observation is complete, the principal must analyze and reflect upon the collected data before delivering feedback to the teacher. In delivering feedback to teachers, the principal should acknowledge strengths, identify areas of development, praise extra professional efforts, and ask questions for future reflection and providing suggestions. (Ovando, 2003). Lastly, it was recommended that principals follow-up with teachers in an effort to provide ongoing support and resources, and to encourage teachers to excel at their craft (Ovando, 2003, pp. 10-11).

Similar to Ovando (2003), Danielson (2010) outlined specific aspects to a training program for principals responsible for evaluating teachers via the FFT. According to Danielson,

principal training programs should require principals to familiarize themselves with the structure of the Framework for Teaching (Danielson, 2010). Understanding the structure of the framework enables a principal to better utilize the framework to deliver meaningful feedback to teachers. Danielson also suggested that principals learn how to recognize the sources of evidence for each component and element. To do so, ongoing professional development around the FFT and teacher evaluation should be a part of a principals' professional responsibilities. Principals must also learn how to interpret the evidence that they collect during a classroom observation against the rubrics for each component's levels of performance (Danielson, 2010). Lastly, principals must learn how to calibrate their judgments against those of their colleagues (Danielson, 2010). Interrater reliability is important when utilizing a framework, such as the FFT, to evaluate teachers on their instructional practices. Within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, efforts to train principals on the FFT have followed this structure. Intermediate units across Pennsylvania, as well as individual administrative teams within Pennsylvania school districts, are responsible for providing building-level administrators (principals) with this type of training.

The use of standards-based teacher evaluation systems calls for extensive training for administrators who are charged with evaluating teachers' pedagogical practices in order to ensure consistency (Kimball & Milanowski, 2009; Lane & Horner, 2011; Little, 2009; Ovando, 2005). Furthermore, the use of standards-based teacher evaluation systems (such as the FFT) requires the understanding of value-added measures (VAMs). According to Ladd and Walsh (2002), VAMs have two key elements: 1) VAMs focus on changes in the performance of students from year-to-year, and therefore require annual standardized testing of students, and 2) VAMs are calculated for each student within a given school allowing for the calculation of

school-specific measures. Essentially, VAMs quantify the effect (either positive or negative) that individual teachers have on individual student learning over the course of a school year.

The Pennsylvania Value Added Assessment System (PVAAS) is utilized by school districts across Pennsylvania to estimate the academic growth of a particular teacher's students. According to the Pennsylvania Department of Education, PVAAS emphasizes what teachers "have an opportunity to influence – student academic growth" (PVAAS, 2014, p. 4). The value-added scores are included in the overall evaluation rating of teachers who are tested subject area teachers. In other words, those who teach math, science and English Language Arts get a specific PVAAS "score," which is included as part of their overall end-of-year evaluation (PVAAS, 2014).

Evaluator ratings from standards-based teacher evaluation systems (e.g. FFT) can have moderate correlations with classroom average value-added student achievement, and teacher evaluations may have validity as measures of teacher effectiveness (Kimball & Milanowski, 2009). However, Kimball et al. (2009) noted that there is a significant level of variation in the strength of the evaluation rating-student achievement relationship across grade levels and within specific content areas. This variation speaks directly to the need for inter-rater reliability amongst evaluators. As Kimball et al. (2009) suggested if "evaluators differ substantially in the degree to which their ratings correlate with student achievement, teachers could receive consequences that are not justified" (p. 35). In other words, the need for inter-rater reliability is paramount, should a teacher evaluation system be utilized as a method for justifying consequences (e.g. teacher improvement plan or teacher dismissal). As mentioned previously, the FFT assessment tool has been linked to the possible removal of teachers within Pennsylvania, based on two unsatisfactory rating over the course of a ten-year period.

## **2.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE EVALUATIVE FEEDBACK**

### **2.2.1 Attributes of effective feedback systems**

Researchers have made a variety of recommendations in an effort to improve teacher evaluation processes. Covey (1991) and Frase (1992) suggested that school leaders must frame constructive feedback as a necessary element to the professional growth of all educators. Frase (1992) argued that the appropriate mentality for educators is one that supports the notion that everyone has room for improvement. In their high school case study, Colvin, Flannery, Sugai, and Monegan (2009) found that an observation system that gives high school teachers feedback about their instructional practices is “feasible, relevant, and effective” (p. 99). By helping teachers to transition their view of evaluation from a perfunctory and contemptuous process to one that is relevant and meaningful to their professional growth, the perception of the evaluation process and classroom instruction may actually improve (Frase, 1992).

There are various positions associated with providing teachers with feedback on their pedagogical practices. Pajak (2000) argued that evaluative feedback should be formative in nature, utilized solely for the purposes of improving classroom instruction; this argument purports completely removing the evaluative piece from the evaluation. Many teachers may prefer that the feedback that they receive from their administrators be used for professional growth instead of being the basis of their evaluation. However, in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Danielson’s FFT is supposedly being utilized for both the improvement of instruction and the performance evaluation of teachers, as required by Act 82 (PDE, 2015c).

Hill and Grossman (2013) suggested that policymakers should create two systems: one for evaluation and one for instructional improvement. They argued against the assumption that

evaluation systems, which were constructed for accountability purposes, may not serve the purpose of improving teachers' instructional practices (Hill and Grossman, 2013). While Hill and Grossman advocated for the development of a complementary system for instructional improvement, which coexists with systems designed for accountability, the management of two such systems could be a bureaucratic nightmare. Despite this possibility, Hill and Grossman suggested that the complementary system should: 1) be based on subject-specific observation tools that provide teachers with specific guidance on teaching practices, 2) include content experts in the feedback process in order to increase coherence to the feedback, and 3) be designed by individual states and school districts so that the feedback is accurate, meaningful, and promotes the improvement of classroom instruction.

To better provide teachers with the constructive feedback that is necessary to bring about improved classroom instruction, various educational researchers have created teacher evaluation systems, which supposedly assist administrators with the production of constructive evaluative feedback for teachers. Danielson's FFT is one such system. According to Alvarez and Anderson-Ketchmark (2011), Danielson's framework has become the "go to set of teaching standards for districts [that] seek to operationalize their standards for teacher evaluation" (p. 61). The FFT evaluation tool is intended for use with all teachers (Danielson Group, 2010). It is designed to utilize multiple sources of evidence of effective teaching and relies on a specific assessment rubric to measure a teacher's instructional effectiveness (Alvarez & Anderson-Ketchmark, 2011; Danielson Group, 2010).

The FFT purportedly breaks down the complex activity of teaching into 22 components, as indicated by Figure 1 (Danielson Group, 2010). There is a presumption within the FFT that the 22 identified components *fully* encompass the concept of effective teaching, yet it does not

necessarily acknowledge the nuances and organic nature of teaching. Danielson’s model of teacher effectiveness is embedded within Pennsylvania law (Act 82) and with that legal backing comes a presumption of truth. It is generally accepted that the 22 components outlined by Danielson definitely describe all facets of effective teaching, as indicated by the sheer number of school districts across the nation that have either adopted it willingly or due to legislation. Whether or not this model truly and accurately captures the complex nature of teaching is, in itself, a point for further research.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Domain 1: Planning and Preparation</b></p> <p>A. Demonstrating knowledge of content and pedagogy</p> <p>B. Demonstrating knowledge of students</p> <p>C. Setting instructional outcomes</p> <p>D. Demonstrating knowledge of resources</p> <p>E. Designing coherent instruction</p> <p>F. Designing student assessments</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Domain 2: Classroom Environment</b></p> <p>A. Creating an environment of respect and rapport</p> <p>B. Establishing a culture for learning</p> <p>C. Managing classroom procedures</p> <p>D. Managing student behavior</p> <p>E. Organizing physical space</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Domain 3: Instruction</b></p> <p>A. Communicating with students</p> <p>B. Using questioning and discussion techniques</p> <p>C. Engaging students in learning</p> <p>D. Using assessment in instruction</p> <p>E. Demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities</b></p> <p>A. Reflecting on teaching</p> <p>B. Maintaining accurate records</p> <p>C. Communicating with families</p> <p>D. Participating in a professional community</p> <p>E. Growing and developing professionally</p> <p>F. Showing professionalism</p>

**Figure 1. Charlotte Danielson’s Framework - 22 Components of Effective Teaching - The Danielson Group. *The Framework*. (2013)**

Darling-Hammond, Amrein-Beardsley, Haertel and Rothstein (2012) identified Danielson’s FFT as a teacher evaluation system, which includes highly detailed feedback for teachers as part of the evaluation process. Darling-Hammond, et al. examined usage of the FFT

within the Cincinnati Public School system and found that the FFT was an “unusually careful” standards-based system for teacher evaluation that produced ratings that reflected teachers’ effectiveness in supporting learning gains and improved teachers’ performance and future effectiveness. (2012, p. 13). The FFT has been subjected to several validation studies during both its development and refinement stages. A study conducted by the Consortium for Policy Research in Education (CPRE) identified small, consistent, positive correlations between the FFT rating and student learning outcomes. (Measures of Effective Teaching Project, 2010; Milanowski, 2011).

In a summary report of preliminary findings focused on teacher evaluation instruments including the FFT, the Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) Project (2012) indicated that the FFT was positively associated with student achievement gains. It has also been suggested that weaknesses in the training of those who use the FFT to evaluate teachers must be addressed in order to ensure the validity of the FFT process itself (Kimball & Milanowski, 2009; Measures of Effective Teaching Project, 2010; Milanowski, 2011). Due to these findings, the Danielson Group (2013) has strengthened training protocols by requiring evaluators to provide a correct rationale for the scores that are assigned to teachers rather than simply providing an accurate score. The intention is to enhance inter-rater reliability and consistency, which will improve validity of the assessment tool and bolster teachers’ perception of the value of the assessment tool (Danielson Group, 2013).

Despite these initial conclusions, there are calls for further research related to the FFT and teacher evaluation practices. Milanowski (2011) called for more research on the features of an evaluation system that contribute to a higher correlation between teacher ratings and value-added measures of student achievement. Further research is also needed in order to assess the

validity of teacher ratings that are to be used for administrative purposes (Milanowski, 2011). Lastly, Milanowski (2011) called for additional research to examine how administrators are making rating decisions and to compare the benefits and costs of implementing a rigorous teacher evaluation system to other methods of improving classroom instruction.

There are those who challenge the very premise of teacher evaluation tools (e.g. FFT) based on the notion that many of these tools link teacher effectiveness with students' value-added data. Gabriel and Allington (2012) suggested that the questions that are asked about teacher evaluation tools are skewed because of the embedded assumption that value-added scores are the "only existing knowledge about effectiveness in teaching" (p. 44). In other words, Gabriel and Allington alleged that those funding studies on teacher effectiveness have fully subscribed to the notion that value-added scores are the crux of teacher effectiveness and specifically pointed to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation as an example of a funding source that supports this philosophy. Gabriel and Allington proposed five questions for consideration when addressing the issue of effective teacher evaluation tools:

- 1) Do evaluation tools inspire responsive teaching or defensive conformity?
- 2) Do evaluation tools reflect our goals for public education?
- 3) Do evaluation tools encourage teachers to use text in meaningful ways?
- 4) Do evaluation tools spark meaningful conversations with teachers?
- 5) Do evaluation tools promote valuable education experiences? (2012, pp. 46-49)

These questions are not easily answered but force one to consider the gravity of the task of measuring teacher effectiveness. Gabriel and Allington (2012) challenged the notion that the FFT can accurately measure effective teaching, by arguing that excellent teaching is varied across contexts. Regardless of the challenges made against the FFT, there are a variety of

attributes associated with effective feedback systems, as summarized in Table 2.

### **2.2.2 Professional relationships**

Regardless of the system(s) in place to evaluate teachers and improve instruction, there are specific concepts related to teacher evaluation and the development of feedback that permeate the literature. As indicated in Table 2, a climate of trust and respect must be established between those being evaluated and those conducting the evaluation if the feedback is to be received and acted upon (Gutmann, 2014; Marshall, 2009; Ovando, 2005). The establishment of a professional relationship between the two parties may make the evaluation process and sharing of feedback less strenuous for all involved. Brinko (1993) suggested that feedback is more effective when the evaluator is perceived as credible, knowledgeable and well-intentioned. An “us versus them” mentality between teachers and administrators will not strengthen the evaluation process; on the contrary, it can lead to a perception that the evaluation process is simply obligatory.

### **2.2.3 Features of impactful evaluative feedback**

Feedback is a part of effective assessment systems. Scheeler, Ruhl, and McAfee (2004) suggested that immediate feedback is better than delayed feedback, and feedback that is immediate, specific, positive and corrective is most likely to result in lasting change in the behavior patterns of teachers. Teachers are less likely to achieve their professional goals without objective feedback on progress and performance (Covey, 1991; Feeney, 2007). According to Frase (1992), the type of feedback that has been offered to teachers has been, “inaccurate,

shallow, and at times mean-spirited, rather than helpful and uplifting” (p. 179). Feedback of this nature may propagate the idea that teacher evaluation processes are meaningless, and it does not lead to improved instructional practices within the classroom.

Glickman (2002) suggested that teachers require constructive evaluative feedback from their administrator or supervisor in order to become more reflective of their practices. This reflection permits teachers to plan for and achieve goals, which leads to an increased effectiveness within the classroom (Glickman, 2002). Feedback, however, provided to teachers will not sustain continual improvement. Enduring instructional improvement comes from individuals who self-manage, self-monitor and self-modify; in other words, those individuals who are motivated to continually evaluate their practices and make adjustments as needed will experience continual improvement in their instruction (Feeney, 2007; Glickman, 2002).

As previously stated, teacher evaluation systems should serve a variety of purposes, including the formation and delivery of constructive feedback to teachers in an effort to support professional learning and continual growth (Danielson, 2002; Feeney, 2007). In order to achieve this goal, evaluative feedback should be based on data collected during classroom observations, provide teachers with examples of effective teaching from their practice, and promote the practice of reflection and adaptability in order to stimulate instructional improvements (Danielson, 1996; Danielson & McGreal, 2000; Feeney, 2007; Glickman, 2002; Marzano, Pickering & Pollock, 2001). Teachers tend to value clear and specific written feedback that is based on classroom data and fosters professional dialogue with administrators (Gutmann, 2014; Marshall, 2009; Ovando, 2005). Teachers are open to discuss instructional strengths and weaknesses with an evaluator and are encouraged by the acknowledgement of their quality teaching (Gutmann, 2014; Marshall, 2009; Ovando, 2005). Taking these findings into

consideration, at face value the PDE DEBE and PDE 426, 427 and 428 evaluation forms are demonstrative of evaluation practices that are not highly effective, as these forms do not overtly promote reflection, self-direction, professional dialogue, or clear and specific written feedback as part of the evaluation process.

Collecting performance data from multiple sources is of key importance to the evaluation process (Danielson, 2002; Feeney, 2007; Ovando, 2006). Taking note of what teachers and students actually do in the classroom setting is important in the development of constructive feedback. Notes on observations taken during a classroom visit are not enough. Some researchers argued that the use of a criterion-based rubric is needed if one is to provide teachers with focused feedback on their pedagogical practices (Danielson, 2002; Feeney, 2007). Teachers should also feel that the criteria by which they are being measured is valid and encompasses the components of effective teaching (Little, 2009). Evaluative feedback is more effective when it includes accurate data that is clear, indisputable and contains information that is content-rich (Brinko, 1993). Vague generalities and empty praise offered to teachers by evaluators will not result in improved instructional practices. Feedback, instead, should be focused on specific issues, behaviors, skills and/or goals (Brinko, 1993; Danielson, 2002).

Feedback provided to teachers should acknowledge instructional strengths, identify areas in need of development, and promote the concept of reflection through a structured process of questioning and conversation (Danielson, 2002; Feeney, 2007; Ovando, 2006). Brinko (1993) suggested that “feedback is more effective when it creates cognitive dissonance” (p. 580). In other words, evaluative feedback should highlight inconsistencies in one’s thoughts or actions and help to prepare one for the change that should ultimately occur because of the feedback that is given. The feedback itself may serve as a means of building positive rapport amongst teachers

and administrators (acknowledgement of instructional strengths), a method for identifying the professional development needs of teachers (identify areas in need of development), and a catalyst for self-directedness and instructional improvement (reflective practices).

Open and honest communication between teachers and administrators is vital throughout the evaluation process if improvement in pedagogical practices is to be realized. Honest discussion of strengths and weaknesses may become the driving force behind the professional development offered to teachers. Professional development should be aligned to the evaluation criteria, and the results of a teacher's evaluation should ultimately be used to support a teacher's professional growth (Little, 2009). Furthermore, Feeney (2007) indicated that administrators should assist teachers in the establishment of professional goals that are measured in terms of student learning and pursue new strategies and tools that will support teachers in their professional learning. The communication that occurs between teachers and administrators during the evaluation process should result in teachers exercising reflective inquiry. Feeney (2007) suggested the use of structured conversation to promote reflective inquiry and collaboration (especially after a lesson observation has been conducted). Conversations can be structured by rubrics, pre-planned questions and references to specific data collected during classroom observations. The FFT, for example, utilizes a rubric to generate conversation between teachers and administrators (Danielson, 2010). Oftentimes, the teacher's use of the FFT rubric jumpstarts the process of reflection and inquiry into one's professional practice (Danielson, 2010).

The teacher evaluation process has evolved from a system that was completely subjective and focused on factors that did not necessarily impact students achievement and learning (PDE DEBE-5501), to a system that was more clearly focused on attributes that have been general

accepted as meaningful to the instructional and learning processes (PDE 426, 427 and 428), to a system that is aligned to a highly detailed rubric with a structured process that includes multiple steps and multiple opportunities for feedback (FFT, PDE 82-1). Teacher evaluation in Pennsylvania is now more focused on detailed feedback and collaboration between teachers and principals than ever before. Teacher accountability has also become a major factor in the evaluative process with value added measures being factored in.

Table 2 is a synthesis of the characteristics related to evaluative feedback that have been cited, including the need for immediate, specific, corrective and positive feedback. In addition, feedback should be based on observable data, supplemented with examples of effective teaching, and promote the practice of professional reflection on one's teaching practices. Lastly, professional dialogue between teachers and principals is an important characteristic that is dependent upon a relationship that is founded on mutual respect and trust. The importance of the preparation of principals in delivering feedback to teachers has been stated, as it has correlated to improving classroom instructional practices. Ongoing training for school administrators in the realm of evaluative feedback is extremely important to the teacher evaluation process.

**Table 2. Effective Feedback**

<b>Attributes of Effective Feedback Systems</b>	<b>Characteristics of Professional Relationships</b>	<b>Features of Impactful Evaluative Feedback</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Focus on professional growth</li> <li>2. Feasibility of implementation</li> <li>3. Relevant feedback</li> <li>4. Formative feedback</li> <li>5. Delivery of specific guidance</li> <li>6. Accurate feedback</li> <li>7. Meaningful feedback</li> <li>8. Multiple sources of data</li> <li>9. Inter-rater reliability</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Trusting</li> <li>2. Respectful</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Immediate</li> <li>2. Specific and clearly written</li> <li>3. Positive</li> <li>4. Corrective</li> <li>5. Constructive</li> <li>6. Supports continual growth</li> <li>7. Based on observational data</li> <li>8. Promotes reflection</li> <li>9. Includes professional dialogue</li> <li>10. Results in professional development plans</li> </ol>

### **3.0 METHOD**

This chapter discusses the methodology utilized in this action research study. The chapter begins with the statement of the inquiry problem, which is then followed by the three research questions. The research design and conceptual framework are described in this section, as are the research instrument. A discussion of the methods of data analysis is offered, as is an examination of the effect of the study on stakeholders. Lastly, limitations of this action research study are provided.

#### **3.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

With the passage of Act 82 in 2012, Charlotte Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* (FFT) was established as the overarching model of effective teaching in Pennsylvania (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2015). Implementation of this evaluation tool was slow moving, and, as a result, there were varying degrees of familiarity with and acceptance of the new evaluation system amongst Pennsylvania's teachers and administrators (Lane & Horner, 2011). Research that investigated the perceived value and utilization of evaluative feedback on the instructional practices of teachers is needed in order to assist principals in refining and improving their practice of providing teachers with evaluative feedback. This research is important to the researcher's professional context as an administrator at Eden Middle School for three reasons: 1)

the researcher is responsible for evaluating teachers in accordance with the FFT, 2) the researcher did not know how teachers were perceiving the evaluative feedback that he was providing via the FFT, and 3) the researcher wants to improve his practice of providing teachers with useful and relevant evaluative feedback.

### **3.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The following are the specific research questions that drove this inquiry:

Q1: To what extent do middle school teachers value the evaluative feedback provided to them by their principal via the Framework for Teaching?

Q2: To what extent do teachers utilize the evaluative feedback provided to them by their principal via the Framework for Teaching?

Q3: What are teacher perceptions of the specific components of the evaluative feedback process that supports instructional change?

### **3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN**

This action research study investigated the perceptions of middle school teachers related to the value and utilization of the evaluative feedback provided to them via the FFT. This study was aligned to Gilmore, Krantz, and Ramirez's (1986) description of action research in which they discussed a:

dual commitment...to study a system and concurrently to collaborate with members of the system in changing it in what is together regarded as a desirable direction. Accomplishing this twin goal requires the active collaboration of researcher and client, and thus it stresses the importance of co-learning as a primary aspect of the research process. (p. 161)

Mills (2003) further refined this definition by suggesting that education-based action research is any systematic inquiry conducted by educators who have a vested interest in the teaching and learning process and who seek to further understand how their schools operate.

Within this action research study, there was a dual commitment by the researcher to study the system of teacher evaluation that exists within Eden Middle School, while concurrently collaborating with teachers to improve classroom instruction and the culture of supervision that exists at Eden Middle School. The ultimate goal of this study was “co-learning” amongst those who have a vested interest in learning more about the value and utilization of evaluative feedback and the development of a culture of supervision that enables evaluative feedback to impact the instructional process (Gilmore et al., 1986; Mills, 2003).

This study represents the first iteration of an action research cycle. Figure 2 shows a simple model of the iterative nature of the action research cycle described by MacIsaac (1995). Each cycle of MacIsaac’s model involves four steps: plan, act, observe, and reflect. The remainder of Section 3.3 is organized according to the four phases of action research outlined by MacIsaac (1995). It should be noted that the third phase is discussed more thoroughly in Chapter 4 and the fourth phase is more thoroughly discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, as these phases correspond to data analysis and reflection, respectively.

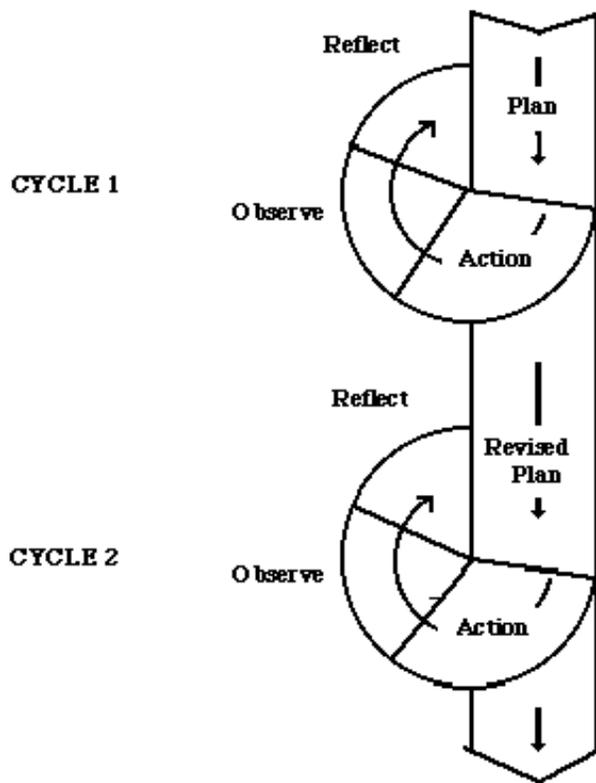


Figure 2. Simple Action Research Cycle. Reprinted with permission from *An Overview of Action Research*, D. MacIsaac (1995). Retrieved from <http://physiced.buffalostate.edu/danowner/actionrsch.html>

### 3.3.1 Planning

The “planning” phase of this action research study involved considering the creation of a means for collecting data from teachers about their perceptions of the evaluative feedback that they received via the FFT. After some deliberation, two methods of data collection were utilized in this study: 1) an electronic inventory administered via Qualtrics and 2) a professional conversation with teachers who were identified as having been evaluated via the FFT. A professional conversation was selected as a research instrument in place of a more traditional focus group because of the nature of action research. All nine of the teacher-participants

participated in the professional conversation with the researcher at one time. The inventory was divided into two main areas: 1) Domain 2 of the Danielson Rubric (Classroom and Environment) and 2) Domain 3 of the Danielson Rubric (Instruction). These two domains were selected as a focus for this study because they are directly addressed by principals during a formal observation of a teacher's instruction in the classroom setting. The inventory was designed to assist in gathering insight into the experiences and perceptions of teachers as they related to evaluative feedback received via the FFT. The inventory was also designed to result in the collection of data about the extent to which teachers value the feedback that they were provided with on Domains 2 and 3 of the Danielson Rubric.

Being that this study aimed to collect data that would assist administrators in their efforts to deliver meaningful, impactful and actionable evaluative feedback to teachers, creating a platform for professional dialogue was critical to the study. In order to address this concern, the professional conversation was included and guided by a series of specific questions that were designed to assist in determining the extent to which teachers value evaluative feedback, the extent to which teachers utilize evaluative feedback, and the specific components of the evaluative feedback process that cultivates a culture of supervision that support instructional change. Appendices F and G present the inventory and the professional conversation protocols, respectively.

The teachers' responses to inventory questions were completely anonymous and in no way did their participation in this study impact their overall teaching evaluation. Teachers' responses to questions asked during the professional conversation have been kept confidential through the process of transcribing the audio-recording. All names have been redacted from the transcript, as have any other identifiable markers. All data collected via the inventory instrument

and professional conversation were de-identified, so as to assure the anonymity of the participants.

### **3.3.2 Action**

The “action” phase of this study involved the distribution of the inventory and the enactment of the professional conversation with teachers. Ten teachers in total were invited to participate in the inventory and the professional conversation via email communication (see Appendices H and I, respectively). These teachers were invited to participate because they were evaluated by the researcher via the FFT during either the 2015-2016 or 2016-2017 school years. Ultimately, nine teachers consented to participate in both the inventory and the professional conversation. Teacher-participants did not have to agree to complete the inventory and participate in the professional conversation in order to participate in this study, however, all nine teachers did participate in both the inventory and professional conversation. Teacher-participants were given one week to complete the inventory via Qualtrics. One email reminder was sent to teachers prior to the inventory being closed. Teacher-participants agreed to meet together on a specific date for the professional conversation with the researcher. The date for this meeting was selected via an electronic poll. The professional conversation was audio-recorded and then transcribed.

### **3.3.3 Observation**

The “observation” phase of this action research study is represented by the analysis offered throughout Chapter 4. This phase is categorized by the findings that stemmed from the analysis of the data collected via the inventory and the professional conversation. Teacher-participant

responses to the inventory questions provided insight into the value placed on evaluative feedback by teachers and the utilization of evaluative feedback by teachers. Like that of the inventory, data collected via the professional conversation aided the researcher in further understanding the value and utilization of evaluative feedback by teachers but also shed light on the specific components of the evaluative feedback process that supports instructional change. The data collected was coded by hand by the researcher using deductive coding. The themes that emerged from this coding process served as the conceptual framework for this study. The emergent codes aligned to Saldaña's (2016) description of Values Coding, in which the "application of codes to the data reflects the participant's values, attitudes, and beliefs" (p. 131).

#### **3.3.4 Reflection**

The "reflection" phase of this action research study is represented by aspects of the data analysis offered in Chapter 4 and the researcher's recommendations that are offered in Chapter 5. However, the reflection phase of this action research cycle resulted in the researcher providing recommendations on a variety of potential future actions. These potential actions include the following: 1) the refinement of the process of supervision and evaluation, 2) the planning of professional development offerings for teachers and other principals, and 3) taking steps to nurture a community of practice in which all stakeholders find value in the process and outcomes of supervision and evaluation.

### **3.4 INQUIRY STANCE**

This research was situated within the constructivist paradigm as described by Mertens (2010). Using this framework, the study sought to understand the experiences and understandings of others from their perspective. In other words, middle school teachers have their own perspectives of evaluative feedback processes and of the evaluative feedback that they receive from their principal. By questioning middle school teachers about their experiences with teacher evaluation and evaluative feedback and about their thoughts and beliefs about evaluative feedback, these teachers' experiences and perspectives can be highlighted and principals can gain access to teachers' own understandings of being evaluated according to the FFT. Understanding the experiences of teachers would not only inform this research study, but more importantly, it would inform the process of providing teachers with evaluative feedback.

### **3.5 RESEARCH SETTING AND PARTICIPANTS**

#### **3.5.1 Research setting**

The research site chosen for this inquiry was Eden Middle School, a small suburban school, located in Southwestern Pennsylvania. Eden Middle School's forty teachers serve approximately 460 students in grades 6-8. As of 2016, teachers at Eden Middle School have an average of 15+ years of teaching experience. Most of the teachers at Eden Middle School have been evaluated via various evaluation systems employed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania between 2000 and 2015. Having served as a middle school principal in two school districts over the past six

years, the researcher has personally utilized two evaluation tools to assess the effectiveness of middle school teachers (e.g. PDE Forms 426, 427 and 428, Framework for Teaching).

Eden School District first adopted the Framework for Teaching (FFT) as the method for teacher evaluation in the 2015-2016 school year because the teachers' collective bargaining agreement did not expire until July of 2015. As of 2012, Act 82 required all newly crafted collective bargaining agreements between school districts and teacher unions to include the FFT as the method for teacher evaluation. All Eden School District teachers and administrators were provided with training related to the FFT at the beginning of the 2015 school year and are, at the very least, familiar with the FFT process, domains, and related components.

### **3.5.2 Participants**

There are a variety of reasons why Eden Middle School teachers were particularly important to this study. First, the teachers are familiar with a variety of evaluation systems. The perceptions held by Eden Middle School teachers of the evaluation process and the feedback that they have received through these prior evaluation processes certainly informed how they responded to evaluation according to the FFT in this study. Secondly, Eden Middle School teachers have experienced major changes in leadership over the past three academic school years. Teachers at Eden Middle School have worked with five different administrators during this three-year span. Since Eden Middle School teachers have been evaluated via various evaluation systems by a variety of school administrators, the significance of the evaluative feedback on a teacher's classroom instruction was uncertain. The utilization of and value placed on the evaluative feedback provided to Eden Middle School teachers was critical to the conversation about the impact of constructive feedback on instructional practices.

Ten teachers were originally asked to participate in this study. Nine of the ten teachers who were invited to participate consented to do so. Participants varied in teaching experience, age, and gender. Of the nine participants, four participants were non-tenured, while the other five participants had earned tenured prior to the 2015-2016 school year. Teaching experience amongst the participants ranged from one to thirty-two years. Teachers from all content areas were eligible for participation in this study. Each of the participants were either formally observed via the FFT during the 2016-2017 school year or were formally observed via the FFT during the 2015-2016 school year. In both instances, the participants received evaluative feedback on their instructional practices from the researcher via the FFT. Each of the participants asked to participate in this study received a rating of “satisfactory” on the Act 82-1 form in either 2015-2016 or 2016-2017.

### **3.5.3 Researcher as participant**

As the researcher, it is important to note my six years of experience serving as a middle school principal and five years of experience as a classroom teacher at both the middle and high school levels. During my tenure as an administrator, I used the PDE 426, 427 and 428 forms as well the PDE 82-1 forms to evaluate teachers. The training that I received on the implementation of the Framework for Teaching and utilization of the PDE 82-1 form came from various professional development conferences provided by Intermediate Units located in Western Pennsylvania, and from trainings provided by district level administrators from within the school districts that I have worked. Despite being the researcher in this action research study, I also consider myself to be a participant in the sense that I will use the findings of the study to directly inform my practice as an instructional leader and to foster a culture of learning within the research setting.

It is also important to acknowledge the relationships that have been established between the researcher and the participants at Eden middle school. As a new administrator at Eden Middle School, I took specific steps to foster positive relationships with teachers, and to build a school culture in which the sharing of evaluative feedback is the norm. I provided all teachers with professional development around the Framework for Teaching and Danielson Rubric. In addition, I engaged all teachers in the creation of a walk-through observation form, which was then used by Eden Middle School administrators (principal and assistant principal) to capture observational data during walk-through observations. By engaging teachers in a peer observation protocol known as “Walk-Abouts,” teachers were encouraged to conduct walk-through observations of their colleagues’ classrooms and to provide one another with positive feedback. Lastly, I worked to establish a supervision model in which approximately 25% of the teaching staff underwent formal observation via the framework for teaching as part of a four year cycle. All of these actions serve as groundwork in the establishment of a school culture in which evaluative feedback is commonplace, appreciated, and expected.

### **3.6 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT**

Data collection to address the aforementioned research questions was conducted via two methods: 1) a Qualtrics-based electronic inventory and 2) a professional conversation. Both of these methods were conducted within the inquiry setting, Eden Middle School. This section describes the inventory instrument and professional conversation data collection processes and protocols.

### 3.6.1 Inventory

The use of an inventory in this study was important because it provided reliable direction for planning future reflective professional development opportunities for teachers. The inventory was anonymous, which was important in this instance as the study focused on individual teacher evaluations. Prior to its deployment, the inventory was reviewed by a former Intermediate Unit employee who was responsible for training administrators on the FFT and five school principals who are familiar with the Framework for Teaching (having utilized it to evaluate teachers since its adoption by the Pennsylvania Department of Education in 2012). None of these professionals are employed by Eden School District. The inventory was also piloted by three middle school teachers who have been evaluated under the PDE DEBE-5501, the PDE 428, and the newly established PDE 82-1. These teachers are not members of the teaching faculty at Eden Middle School.

The feedback garnered through the vetting and piloting processes was used to refine the inventory instrument prior to its distribution (grammatical and numbering issues were addressed). Once the inventory was finalized, teacher-participants were sent an electronic link that directed the participants to the Qualtrics Survey System. This system is provided by the University of Pittsburgh for survey research and allows electronic survey distribution, response collection, and basic analysis in a confidential and secured environment.

The inventory was designed by the researcher and informed by the reviewed literature. The inventory included closed and open-ended items, the text of which is located in Appendix F. The inventory instrument was divided into two key areas: 1) Domain 2 of the Danielson Rubric, which focuses on *Classroom Environment*, and 2) Domain 3 of the Danielson Rubric, which focuses on *Instruction*. Domains 2 and 3 were selected as focal points of the inventory because

these two domains are of primary focus for administrators during the evaluation process under the Danielson model. The inventory questions were designed to gather insight into the perceptions of middle school teachers, including the value that they place on the evaluative feedback that they have been provided with via the FFT, and the impact of the evaluative feedback on their instructional practices (utilization of evaluative feedback). It is through the lenses of Classroom Environment (Domain 2) and Instruction (Domain 3) that administrators aim to provide teachers with meaningful, impactful, and actionable evaluative feedback. Open-ended narrative response questions were employed to determine whether or not teachers utilized the feedback that they received on Domains 2 and 3 to alter their instruction in any way.

The inventory instrument itself also served as a guided-reflection professional development activity for teachers. The data provided by teachers were analyzed by the researcher in order to improve the nature of evaluative feedback within the research site. This approach provided insight into the reasons why teachers value the evaluative feedback that they are provided with. It also provided insight into the reasons why teachers utilized evaluative feedback to alter their instructional practices or not. Ultimately, the findings and reflective professional development activity (inventory) may be transferable to other middle schools or, more generally, to any K-12 school.

### **3.6.2 Professional conversation**

A professional conversation was also conducted as a part of this action research study. A professional conversation was selected as a research instrument in place of a more traditional focus group because of the nature of action research. This study was less about data collection and more about engaging with colleagues to improve practice. The specific questions asked of

the participants during the professional conversation are located in Appendix G. Like the inventory instrument, the professional conversation served as a guided-reflection professional development activity for the teachers and also for the researcher. Data collected via the professional conversation provided insight into the type of evaluative feedback that teachers utilized to alter their instructional practices, how evaluative feedback could be improved so that it is more actionable, and the reasons why teachers value or do not value evaluative feedback. Table 3 in the following section illustrates the method design and analysis that followed the collection of data.

Like the inventory, prior to the professional conversation taking place, the questions used to guide the professional conversation were reviewed by a former Intermediate Unit employee who was responsible for training administrators on the FFT and five school principals who are familiar with the Framework for Teaching (having utilized it to evaluate teachers since its adoption by the Pennsylvania Department of Education in 2012). None of these professionals are employed by Eden School District. These questions were also reviewed by three middle school teachers who have been evaluated under the PDE DEBE-5501, the PDE 428, and the newly established PDE 82-1. These teachers are not members of the teaching faculty at Eden Middle School. The feedback garnered through the review process was used to refine the questions prior to the professional conversation taking place (grammatical issues were addressed).

Nine questions guided the professional conversation. The questions were asked of all teacher-participants during a single meeting. The meeting lasted for approximately 45 minutes and was conducted in an administrative office at Eden Middle School in order to ensure privacy. Similar to the inventory, the implementation of a professional conversation in this study was

important for a variety of reasons. First, it provided reliable direction for planning future reflective professional development opportunities for teachers. Ritter and Barnett (2016) found that meaningful teacher evaluation processes can create opportunities for meaningful conversations focused on classroom instruction and student achievement to occur, which may result in a school setting in which teachers and leaders have regular conversations about improving instructional practice and student learning. Secondly, it informed the evaluation process utilized by teachers and administrators. Specifically, the data provided by teachers were analyzed by the researcher in order to improve the evaluative feedback process that exists within the school. Thirdly, it highlighted the aspects of evaluative feedback that teachers value most and the perceptions that teachers have of the culture of supervision that exists within their school. These understandings have impacted the planning of a second iteration of the action research cycle. Like that of the inventory, the findings and reflective professional development activity (professional conversation) may be transferable to other middle schools or, more generally, to any K-12 school. Table 3 in the following section illustrates the method design and analysis that followed the collection of data.

### **3.7 DATA ANALYSIS**

Upon completion of the inventory and professional conversation, the process of analyzing the data surrounding evaluative feedback began. Table 3 illustrates the process of data analysis and is organized according to each research question. The majority of the data came from the professional conversation. It is the belief of the researcher that the professional conversation resulted in more data generation than that of the inventory because the teacher-participants were

able to listen to the responses of their colleagues and build off of one another's responses during the professional conversation. A smaller portion of the data was generated through the inventory. The first phase of the data analysis process was the transcription of the audio-recorded professional conversation and a review of teacher responses to the inventory questions.

The second step of analysis was the initial reading of the transcripts from the professional conversation. During this reading, a different color highlighter was used to underline portions of the teachers' responses that related to each research question. For example:

Q1: To what extent do middle school teachers value the evaluative feedback provided to them by their principal via the Framework for Teaching? (*Yellow highlighter*)

Q2: To what extent do teachers utilize the evaluative feedback provided to them by their principal via the Framework for Teaching? (*Green highlighter*)

Q3: What are teacher perceptions of the specific components of the evaluative feedback process that cultivates a culture of supervision that supports instructional change? (*Blue highlighter*)

These colors were used to visually differentiate what was transcribed and to indicate a connection to a specific research question. In some cases, the responses provided by teachers were attributed to more than one research question. The second phase of data analysis also included a more thorough review of the reports generated through Qualtrics. These reports enabled the researcher to begin to write analytic statements about the responses provided by teachers in regards to the first and second research questions.

The third step of data analysis involved the use of index cards to code and record the most common themes (codes) that stemmed from the professional conversation. The researcher relied on Saldaña’s (2016) description of manually coding data via the use of slips of paper (notecards). Each time a code was repeated, a simple tally mark was made on the appropriate index card (frequency). A corresponding notation was also made on the actual transcript, indicating where each code emerged during the professional conversation. In the end, a visual representation of the main codes that emerged from the study was created. The main codes that emerged from this process provided the researcher with the means to continue writing analytic statements about the data.

The final step of the data analysis process involved double-checking the findings to ensure that no errors were made in the coding process nor in the interpretations of the reports generated via Qualtrics. Once verified, a summary of the findings was written. Included in the summary, which is further discussed in Chapter 4, is an analysis of which findings were supported by the literature and which findings were not.

**Table 3. Method Design and Analysis**

<b>Inquiry Questions</b>	<b>Design and/or Method</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Analysis and Interpretation</b>
To what extent do middle school teachers value the evaluative feedback provided to them by their principal via the Framework for Teaching?	Qualtrics inventory questions 4-9, 11-14, 16	Teacher rankings of items aligned to Domains 2 and 3 of the FFT will demonstrate the level of value that teachers assign to the feedback provided to them.	Descriptive analysis – number of and frequency of rankings will be described via written analytic statements.  Data will be read and emerging themes will be coded.
To what extent do teachers utilize the evaluative feedback provided to them by their principal via the	Qualtrics inventory questions 8, 10, 15, 17  Professional conversation	Teacher responses to open-ended narrative items aligned to Domains 2 and 3 of the FFT will	Data will be read and emerging themes will be coded.  After initial coding

<p>Framework for Teaching?</p>	<p>questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6</p>	<p>demonstrate the ways in which teachers utilize the feedback provided to them.</p>	<p>occurs, data will be reread and further distilled into more focused codes.</p> <p>After coding, themes and trends will be converted into written analytic statements.</p>
<p>What are the specific components of the evaluative feedback process that cultivates a culture of supervision that supports instructional change?</p>	<p>Professional conversation questions 6, 7, 8, 9</p>	<p>Teacher rankings of the components of the FFT process.</p>	<p>Descriptive analysis – number of and frequency of rankings will be described via written analytic statements.</p>

### 3.8 EFFECT OF THE STUDY ON STAKEHOLDERS

A number of stakeholders were either directly or indirectly impacted by the evaluative feedback generated as part of the FFT process. Those individuals who were most directly impacted by the FFT include: the 460 middle school students at Eden Middle School, the 40 teachers at Eden Middle School, and the middle school administration at Eden Middle School. The feedback provided to the teachers by the school principal has the potential to directly impact the classroom instruction provided to students by their teachers. In addition, teacher evaluations are directly related to obtaining tenure and the continuation of employment within a school district. More importantly, a better understanding of the feedback process impacted the overall culture of supervision that exists within the inquiry setting, and amongst teachers and administrators.

Those individuals who were indirectly impacted by the evaluative feedback generated through the FFT process include: the Superintendent of Eden School District, the nine members

of the Eden School Board, and the parents and guardians of Eden Middle School students. The data collected through the new teacher evaluation process by the school principal has the potential to assist the Superintendent in her planning of and budgeting for professional development for teachers. The Superintendent and Eden School Board may consider teacher evaluation data in making personnel decisions. The parents of Eden Middle School students expect to have effective teachers in every classroom, as they value the education that their children receive.

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

There were three limitations in the design and implementation of this action research study. The first limitation was the limited sample size, nine participants. With so few participants, it could be difficult to identify ways to improve the process of evaluation while concurrently learning how to nurture a culture of supervision that exists within a school setting and amongst teachers and administrators. This study permitted the researcher to address this problem of practice through the steps defined by the action research cycle, as defined by MacIsaac (1995).

The second limitation of this study was the issue of accuracy in participant responses. Being that the researcher is also the direct supervisor of the participants, there may have been some hesitation on behalf of the participants to be completely honest in their responses to questions asked of them. The researcher went to great lengths to assure each participant that their honest feedback was needed to help the researcher continue to grow as an instructional leader, and to help other teachers receive more actionable and meaningful evaluative feedback from the researcher. To do so, the participants were provided with a detailed explanation of the

purpose of the study, and participant anonymity in the research study was also ensured.

The third limitation of this action research study was the bias of the researcher. There was the potential for bias when the researcher interpreted the responses provided by teachers during the professional conversation. As in any qualitative study, the researcher's understandings guided this study. There was also a possibility that personal bias might influence the direction of any study, despite the researcher's best attempts at remaining neutral. Being mindful of this possibility assisted the researcher in remaining as neutral as possible during the course of this study

## 4.0 DATA, ANALYSIS, AND FINDINGS

The findings associated with the three research questions that frame this study will be discussed throughout Chapter 4. For the purpose of discerning between the researcher's words and that of the teacher participants, direct quotes from teacher-participants will be italicized in Chapter 4. The analysis of the data provides a lens through which the findings become clear. Chapter 4 is organized according to the following research questions:

Q1: To what extent do middle school teachers value the evaluative feedback provided to them by their principal via the Framework for Teaching?

Q2: To what extent do teachers utilize the evaluative feedback provided to them by their principal via the Framework for Teaching?

Q3: What are teacher perceptions of the specific components of the evaluative feedback process that supports instructional change?

In addition, throughout Chapter 4, reference is made to Domain 2 and Domain 3 of the Framework for Teaching. These two Domains were described in prior sections as follows: Domain 2 of the Danielson Rubric focuses on Classroom Environment, and Domain 3 of the Danielson Rubric focuses on Instruction. Domains 2 and 3 were selected as focal points of this study because these two domains are of primary focus for administrators during the evaluation process under Danielson's Framework for Teaching.

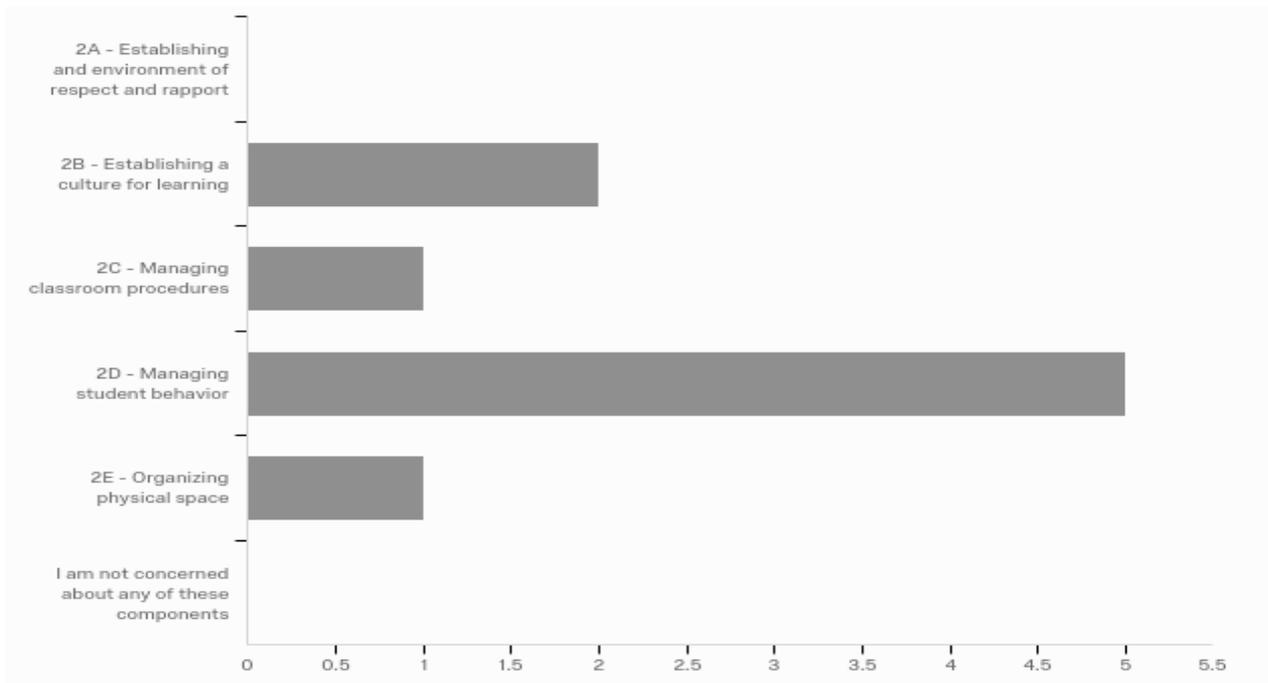
#### **4.1 RESEARCH QUESTION 1: TO WHAT EXTENT DO MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHERS VALUE THE EVALUATIVE FEEDBACK PROVIDED TO THEM BY THEIR PRINCIPAL VIA THE FRAMEWORK FOR TEACHING?**

This action research study provided teachers with a forum for sharing their perspectives on the value of the FFT evaluative feedback. Teacher responses to inventory questions 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 provided insight into the level of importance (value) that teachers place on the evaluative feedback that they were provided with related to Domain 2 (Classroom Environment). Each of these questions built upon the previous question, which required teachers to reflect deeply about their practice and about the evaluative feedback that they received from their principal (the researcher) via the FFT.

##### **4.1.1 Value of evaluative feedback related to Domain 2: Classroom environment**

Inventory question 4 required teachers to identify an area of concern from within Domain 2. An area of concern was defined for participants as a component from Domain 2 that the teacher-participants felt that they could improve, refine, extend, or expand upon. Inventory question 4 also permitted teacher-participants to indicate that they did not have any areas of concern within Domain 2 (this selection would have prompted teacher-participants to respond to question 5. However, none of the respondents made this selection). This question was asked as a means to engage the teacher-participants with both the Danielson rubric and the written evaluative feedback that they had received via the FFT. Responses to inventory question 4, which are illustrated in Figure 3, suggest that all nine of the teacher-participants felt as though they had areas in which they could improve upon, as described by Domain 2 of the Framework for

Teaching. Five of the respondents indicated that component 2D (Managing Student Behavior) was their particular area of concern. Two respondents indicated that component 2B (Establishing a Culture for Learning) was of concern to them. Components 2C (Managing Classroom Procedures) and 2E (Organizing Physical Space) each had one respondent indicate that these respective components were of particular concern to them.



**Figure 3. Domain 2, Area of Concern. Produced via Qualtrics.**

As a follow up to inventory question 4, inventory question 6 asked the respondents whether or not the the evaluative feedback that was provided to them for the specific area of concern that they identified from Domain 2 addressed their concern. Seven of the nine respondents reported that the feedback that they received from their principal addressed their concern from a specific component of Domain 2.

Question 7 from the inventory asked teacher-participants to explain how the feedback provided in regard to their area of concern for Domain 2 addressed their concern. One teacher wrote:

*I had a specific piece of the lesson that did not go as smoothly as I was hoping for. Feedback was provided specific to that issue, and it helped to reinforce my sense of the lesson. The specific feedback provided helped clarify where the challenge was, while also specifically identifying which parts of that exchange went smoothly. Ultimately this type of feedback allows me to make very specific teaching moves to improve my teaching in the future.*

Another teacher wrote:

*In my pursuit to improve my instruction specifically around our district-wide focus on developing a culture of thinking, it is one of my major goals this school year to continue to refine a culture of learning in my classroom. In the feedback that was provided to me, I heard reflections and suggestions on how to best utilize the Step-In-Step-Out thinking routine as it relates to the students digging into primary sources with the goal of analyzing the text thoroughly. Specifically, in the development of a graphic organizer to better organize and document student thinking regarding their analysis of primary sources.*

The other five teacher responses were very similar in nature to the two reported here. Seven of nine responses to question 7 indicated that the teachers valued the feedback that they were provided with, as was demonstrated by their willingness to make instructional changes and adjustments based on the feedback itself. In other words, the teacher-participants valued the feedback that they received, so they utilized the feedback to alter their instruction moving

forward. At this point, the data suggests that these seven teacher-participants valued the feedback that they received because it addressed their perceived area of concern (an area in which they can improve, refine, extend, or expand upon).

Two of the nine teacher-participants indicated that the feedback that they received in relation to their area of concern for Domain 2 did not address their concern. One teacher submitted the following response to question 9 of the inventory, which asked participants to explain why the feedback that they were provided with did not address their concern:

*Sometimes it is hard for principals to remember what day to day teaching is really like.*

It is difficult to determine what this respondent meant by this response, as they chose to not answer the follow-up question which asked teachers to provide a specific example of the feedback that you were provided with which demonstrates how their concern was not addressed. The other teacher who responded similarly to question 7 of the inventory submitted the following response:

*My biggest concern in this component had to do with a select number of students. At the time, I was having difficulty in figuring out how to best meet these students' needs in keeping them engaged/involved along with the rest of the class. My feedback was specific, thorough, and highlighted methods I used throughout the class period, but I personally felt that I could improve here.*

Unlike the first respondent, this respondent followed up by submitting an explanation via inventory question 10, which will be discussed in subsection 4.2.1 - Utilization of Evaluative Feedback Related to Domain 2: Classroom Environment.

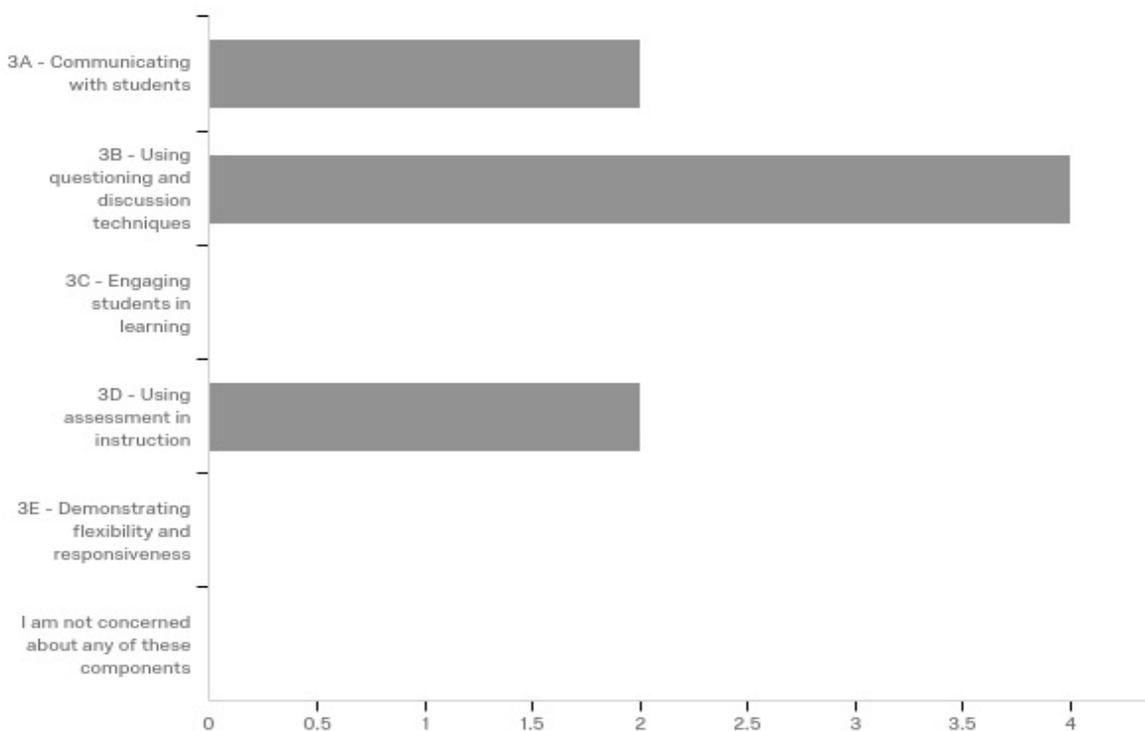
#### **4.1.2 Value of evaluative feedback related to Domain 3: Instruction**

Teacher responses to inventory questions 11, 12, 13, 14, and 16 provide insight into the level of importance (value) that teachers place on the evaluative feedback that they were provided with related to Domain 3 – Instruction. The inventory required teachers to identify an area of concern from within Domain 3. Just as with Domain 2, an area of concern for Domain 3 was defined for participants as a component from Domain 3 in which they felt that they could improve, refine, extend, or expand upon. All nine respondents reported that the feedback that they received from their principal (researcher) addressed their concern regarding a specific component of Domain 3.

It must be noted that one of the nine participants had technical trouble with her computer and could not submit answers to every question (specifically questions 10 through 17). However, this participant emailed the researcher and indicated her responses to questions that she was unable to submit via Qualtrics (this teacher could read all of the inventory questions on their computer, but could not submit their responses via Qualtrics).

Inventory question 11 required teachers to identify an area of concern from within Domain 3. An area of concern was defined for participants as a component from Domain 3 which the teacher-participants felt that they could improve, refine, extend, or expand upon. Inventory question 11 also permitted teacher-participants to indicate that they did not have any areas of concern within Domain 3 (this selection would have prompted teacher-participants to respond to question 12, however, none of the respondents made this selection). This question was asked as a means to engage the teacher-participants with both the Danielson rubric and the written feedback that they had received via the FFT. Responses to inventory question 11, which are illustrated in Figure 4, suggest that eight of the teacher-participants felt as though they had areas in which they could improve upon, as described by Domain 3 of the Framework for

Teaching. The ninth teacher-participant also answered positively to this question, but her response could not be recored via Qualtrics and so is not represented in Figure 4.



**Figure 4. Domain 3, Area of Concern. Produced via Qualtrics.**

Five of the respondents indicated that component 3B (Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques) was their particular area of concern (Figure 4 shows four respondents indicating that 3B was their area of concern. The fifth response was submitted to the researcher via email by the teacher whose computer would not let her submit responses directly into Qualtrics). Components 3A (Communicating with Students) and 3D (Using Assessment in Instruction) each had two respondents indicate that these components were of particular concern to them.

As a follow up to inventory question 11, inventory question 13 asked the respondents whether or not the the evaluative feedback that was provided to them for the specific area of

concern that they identified from Domain 3 addressed their concern. All nine of the respondents reported that the feedback that they received from their principal addressed their concern from a specific component of Domain 3.

Question 14 from the inventory asked teacher-participants to explain how the feedback provided in regard to their area of concern for Domain 3 addressed their concern. One teacher wrote:

*Not only did the feedback mirror the thoughts I had, but it also suggested a technique I found helpful. When planning lessons, I often ask myself the questions I want my students to be able to answer. However, I do not write these questions down because I feel that they will be covered in class. Reading my feedback was helpful in seeing that my questions SHOULD be written down as a reminder to myself and my students of what our goals are.*

A second teacher wrote:

*When reflecting on assessing students, I would like to refine this practice. It is important to me to give frequent feedback to students, thus being one of my goals to increase how and how often it is given. My principal and I discussed providing specific feedback to students more consistently through a variety of means. Since my post-observation, I have been facilitating teacher check-ins where students meet with me to provide direct and specific constructive feedback, especially during the writing process, but in all other [areas] as well.*

All nine responses to question 14 indicated that the teachers valued the feedback that they were provided with, as was demonstrated by their willingness to make instructional changes and adjustments based on the feedback itself. Each of the teacher-participants provided detailed

examples of the feedback that they were provided with, and were able to elaborate on the impact of the feedback on a specific aspect of their teaching practice. Each of the teacher-participants' responses suggest that individual teachers had a positive reaction to the feedback that they were provided with. A sense of appreciation for the evaluative feedback permeates the teachers' responses to question 14.

## **4.2 RESEARCH QUESTION 2: TO WHAT EXTENT DO TEACHERS UTILIZE THE EVALUATIVE FEEDBACK PROVIDED TO THEM BY THEIR PRINCIPAL VIA THE FRAMEWORK FOR TEACHING?**

This action research study provided teachers with a forum for describing the extent to which they utilize evaluative feedback to alter their instructional practice. Teacher responses to inventory questions 8, and 10 provided insight into teachers' utilization of evaluative feedback that they were provided with related to Domain 2 – Classroom Environment. These inventory questions asked teachers to provide specific examples of feedback that they were provided with and speak to the impact of the feedback on their classroom environment.

### **4.2.1 Utilization of evaluative feedback related to Domain 2: Classroom environment**

Questions 8 and 10 of the inventory prompted teachers to provide a specific example of feedback that demonstrates how their individual concerns regarding Domain 2 were addressed, or not, via the feedback provided. Of the nine teacher participants, eight provided a specific example, while

one participant elected not to do so. One of the teachers reported the following in relation to their specific area of concern for Domain 2 via inventory question 8:

*One of my students in particular has a very hard time controlling some of his impulsive behaviors (particularly in speaking out). Anthony provided feedback to me suggesting utilizing a system that assists the student in understanding the rules/expectations for speaking. He suggested placing [a visual] on the [student's] desk that could be taken away each time the student interrupts.*

Another teacher responded:

*While I felt that the lesson in general went smoothly, I had a specific concern around addressing student confusion in facilitating the Compass Points thinking routine. This feedback also allows me to be sure to focus more closely in the future on creating a tighter alignment between using the Compass Points thinking routine and how it interfaces with the project-based question being asked of students. I will use this routine for a future attempt at early stage project-based peer editing, but need to think through that alignment further.*

Another teacher provided the following example, directly quoting the researcher's written evaluative feedback in their response:

*I encourage you to experiment with different classroom organizational set-ups. Seating arrangements can impact instruction, depending on what you are trying to accomplish...I would both be interested in working with you to redesign your instructional space.*

Only one teacher-participant responded to question 10, which was meant to indicate that the feedback that the teacher received in relation to Domain 2 did not address their specific concerns. This teacher stated:

*It is difficult to provide an example because my concerns were more internal in how I was feeling about my management strategies rather than what actually occurred during the lesson. The feedback I was given accurately displayed what occurred during the lesson and highlight areas of strength. It actually made me feel better about the concerns I was having internally.*

This teacher's response does not suggest that the feedback provided to them was inaccurate, but it also does not provide enough of an indication that the feedback was utilized to improve or adjust classroom instruction. What this response does indicate is that this particular teacher may need additional support in the realm of classroom management strategies and more positive reinforcement and feedback about management strategies that are successful. This feedback does appear to have been valuable to the teacher, as it provided them with validation and positive reinforcement, which addressed the teacher's self-reported internal struggle. The process of answering questions about a specific component of the evaluation process prompted the teacher-participant to further reflect upon their practice, the feedback that they received, and their own feelings of inadequacy (which seem to be misplaced).

#### **4.2.2 Utilization of evaluative feedback related to Domain 3: Instruction**

Questions 15 and 17 of the inventory prompted teachers to provide a specific example of feedback that demonstrates how their individual concerns regarding Domain 3 were addressed, or not, via the feedback provided. Of the nine teacher participants, six provided a specific example while three participants elected not to do so. One of the teacher-participants reported the following in response to inventory question 15:

*When students give an incorrect or correct answer, ask them to explain their thinking. Incorrect answers can be a learning opportunity for all students. By asking, "What makes you think that?" or "What makes you say that?" students will be required to explain their thinking which will give you insight into their misconceptions and understandings.*

This respondent incorporated a few direct quotes from the researcher's written feedback into their response to this question. By responding affirmatively to this question, the teacher signified that they have utilized this specific feedback in their teaching practices.

A second teacher provided the following response to inventory question 15, suggesting that they have also utilized the feedback that they have received in relation to Domain 3 to alter their instruction:

*Like in Domain [2], my biggest concern during the lesson occurred during the facilitation of the Compass Points thinking routine. This feedback in Domain 3 considered this same challenge through a different lens (Instruction) which included a specific recommendation from my supervisor about how I could effectively navigate a similar situation in the future. While I appreciate any input as I work to improve my teaching, this type of feed-"back" I truly appreciate, and think of as feed-"forward" as it is an actual well-thought out recommendation that I can carry forward and apply in a wide variety of future lessons and classes.*

Of the nine teacher-participants, zero responded to inventory question 17, which asked the respondents to provide a specific example of evaluative feedback which demonstrates how their personal concern was not addressed in regards to a specific component of Domain 3.

### 4.2.3 Utilization of evaluative feedback: Professional conversation

The reasons why teachers utilized the evaluative feedback that they were provided with for Domain 2 (Classroom Environment) and Domain 3 (Instruction) were highlighted by teacher responses to questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 from the professional conversation. Each of these questions built upon the previous question, requiring teachers to reflect deeply about their practice and about the evaluative feedback that they received from their principal (the researcher) via the FFT.

Question 1 of the professional conversation asked if there were any parts of the evaluative feedback from Domains 2 or 3 that were useful in helping teachers to bring about changes to their instructional practice. Question 2 was directed towards the teachers who answered positively to question 1 and asked these respondents to provide a specific example of feedback that they were able to implement in their classroom. Conversely, question 3 was directed towards the teachers who answered negatively to question 1 and asked these respondents to explain what would have helped to make the evaluative feedback that they received for Domains 2 and 3 more helpful.

All nine teacher-participants indicated that they received evaluative feedback that was useful in bringing about instructional change (question 1). Of the nine teacher-participants, two provided evidence from Domain 2 (Classroom Environment), which indicates that the evaluative feedback that they received was useful in bringing about change to their practice, as it relates to their classroom environment. One teacher-participant stated:

*With one of the student's behaviors...the one student I had was, like, talking out a lot and getting off task. We didn't think that he was actually noticing when he was getting off*

*task. So, you had suggested using Post-Its as a visual on his desk. That might be helpful for his interruptions and I used that and it has worked like a charm.*

This teacher received feedback from the researcher that addressed a specific behavior management issue that was occurring in their classroom. By identifying the issue and offering a procedure that could be utilized to address the issue, the researcher was able to assist the teacher in improving their classroom environment.

The remaining seven teacher-participants provided evidence from Domain 3 (Instruction), which indicates that the evaluative feedback that they received was useful in bringing about change to their practice as it relates to their instruction. One teacher-participant responded to question 1:

*For me, you also made a comment about questioning levels and the levels that my questions were at, in terms of student thinking. Now I'm more careful about how I plan them and who my students are going to be talking to when they answer them. So I know whenever the students are at a higher level, I'm trying to tier the question so that they're talking to each other when I say "turn and talk" or I'm making sure that they're getting the support they need, or meeting the kids who might need more support. So, I'm trying to think through my questions more carefully than I was in the past.*

The researcher provided this teacher with feedback that was specific to the teacher's questioning techniques. According to this teacher, the evaluative feedback that was provided has impacted the teacher's planning and questioning techniques used within the classroom setting.

Question 4 of the professional conversation asked the teacher-respondents how they typically use the evaluative feedback that they are provided with (e.g. ignore some of it, act upon some of it). The responses to question 4 harkened back to the responses that the teacher-

participants provided for questions 1 and 2. All nine of the teacher-participants' responses indicate that the teachers utilize various aspects of the feedback to address specific areas of concern that have either been self-identified, or identified by the researcher. One teacher-participant suggested that after considering all of the feedback that they were provided with, there was one piece of evaluative feedback for component 3D (Using Assessment in Instruction) that was not viable because the teacher previously attempted what the researcher was suggesting.

This teacher stated:

*We do publicly critique, but there aren't the emotions involved. They're a little colder, drier. So, I didn't dismiss [the feedback] but rather thought, I've thought of that in the past. I've tried it. Not so much.*

Question 5 of the professional conversation required the teacher-respondents to provide the researcher with feedback. This question asked the teacher-participants how the evaluative feedback provided to teachers could be improved so that it is more actionable and user-friendly. Zero of the teacher-participants provided suggestions for ways in which the researcher could improve the feedback that he provides teachers with, despite the researcher's attempt at discerning areas for personal improvement through the use of probing questions. Instead, the teacher-participants provided the researcher with feedback that underscored the positive features of the evaluative feedback provided to the teacher-participants. Excerpts from the responses of teacher-participants follow, and speak specifically to the evaluative feedback that each teacher-participant received:

**Teacher 1:** *I think it is so clear how it's factually based first...sometimes there was a suggestion, sometimes it was just a, "I liked how you were doing this" or "I thought that was a good idea..."*

**Teacher 2:** *I like on mine how you have bolded the suggestions so it is easy to see...*

**Teacher 3:** *[I like] the time we have to reflect upon the comments and then we discuss it face to face. I found that really helpful because I could see where my assessment of my own instruction was lining up with yours before we even had a discussion...it can can of open things up in a more constructive way.*

**Teacher 4:** *I felt like my availability of resources was opened up more even after the discussion [post-conference]. I saw what I need to work on and then we kind of elaborated on it.*

**Teacher 5:** *The feedback you gave me in the pre-conference was great because you looked through the lesson and we realized that we might not have enough time to get through all of these points...so even the feedback before the lesson was instrumental for me.*

**Teacher 6:** *The proactiveness of the conversations...you're going to give us valuable feedback to use before we even the lesson happens to ensure that we're putting the students in the right path and that you can observe instruction at the finest level that we can implement it at, which is commendable and something that we appreciate on our end.*

**Teacher 7:** *I cannot overstate how important. Like, this standalone is a fantastic process [Framework for Teaching]...as far as like the level of feedback we've gotten – this has blown everything out of the water. I can't really underscore enough that the fact that it's a part of a cultural conversation...it's not strange for you to come into the room...it's not strange for us to look at each other's work...so the feedback is, if we know it's within a spirit of us trying to improve and we're trying to strive, because that relationship has been established. It's not like, "Oh, he's trying to get me with a*

*dagger.” It’s like taken with an understanding that your goal is to try to improve things for our kids, improve our instruction, and everything.*

**Teacher 8:** *This is my 33<sup>rd</sup> year teaching and I’ve been saying this for 6 or 8 months now. I can’t believe it’s this long but I can count on one hand how many people have written this much about my teaching in total, let alone in a 46 minute class, so I was dumbfounded even how you could get that much in...there was recognition from an administrator...so I’m not blowing smoke, I’m just saying I wish I had 32 years of that.*

**Teacher 9:** *I appreciate that in your feedback you found the things that I did well and you, you know, called those to attention but then you also pointed out valid things that I could improve on because a lot of observations prior I got a lot of like, “Oh this is great.” I found that the constructive criticism, it was all relevant to what I am doing, and important, and helped me become a better educator.*

All nine of the teacher-participants indicated that they were comfortable with the researcher’s delivery of constructive criticism, and all agreed that the tone of the constructive criticism is important to them, as the way in which the evaluative feedback is presented impacts the teachers’ willingness to accept and act up it.

Question 6 of the professional conversation had two parts. The question asked the following of the teacher-respondents: 1) Are there ways in which the evaluation process can be made more beneficial? and 2) Do you feel comfortable with and capable enough to make instructional changes based on the feedback that you are provided with, or is more and specific professional development necessary in order for these changes to take place?

All nine teacher-participants approved of the evaluation process and did not offer

suggestions for improving the process (as outlined by Danielson's Framework for Teaching).

One teacher went so far as to report:

*I would rather go through this every year than the self-directed model. I think it's more valid. I think people take it, I won't say more seriously, but take it to their teaching more literally and the other [self-directed model] is a stumbling block to get through in the year. Not something to benefit from.*

When responding to the second part of question 6, all nine teacher participants indicated that they feel comfortable with and capable enough to make instructional changes based on the feedback that they were provided with. Three of the teacher-participants commented on the need for more specific professional development. One teacher stated:

*I feel that what you provide in terms of constructive criticism is doable and manageable and most of the time they're just simple tweaks that we could make to better instruction for students, but I also feel like if you did provide something that needed professional development, you would make sure that we got the supplement that we needed.*

The second teacher responded:

*Yeah. I've actually been in team meetings where, if you said, "If you need help with this come down and see me, we can get together and work this out." So, yeah, I totally agree.*

While none of the teacher-participants indicated that they personally required specific professional development in order to carry out the suggestions provided to them via the evaluative feedback that they received, all nine of the teacher-participants responded positively to prospect of additional professional development.

### **4.3 RESEARCH QUESTION 3: WHAT ARE TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF THE SPECIFIC COMPONENTS OF THE EVALUATIVE FEEDBACK PROCESS THAT CULTIVATES A CULTURE OF SUPERVISION THAT SUPPORTS INSTRUCTIONAL CHANGE?**

This action research study provided teachers with a forum for describing the perceptions of the specific components of the evaluative feedback process that they feel cultivates a culture of supervision that supports instructional change. Teacher-participants' responses to questions 6, 7, 8, and 9 of the professional conversation provide insight into teachers' perceptions of evaluative feedback and the evaluative feedback process, itself.

As previously mentioned, question 6 of the professional conversation had two parts. The question asked the following of the teacher-respondents: 1) Are there ways in which the evaluation process can be made more beneficial? and 2) Do you feel comfortable with and capable enough to make instructional changes based on the feedback that you are provided with, or is more and specific professional development necessary in order for these changes to take place? The responses to this question, which were discussed in the previous section (Section 4.2.3) suggest that the teacher-participants are wholly satisfied with the evaluation process. The various responses of the teacher-participants to question 6 (and the other questions posed during the professional conversation) indicate that there are aspects of the evaluation process and evaluative feedback which make the process successful, and the feedback actionable, meaningful, and impactful.

Question 7 from the professional conversation asked the teacher respondents how the components of the evaluative feedback process (e.g. pre-conference meeting, formal observation, and post-conference meeting) were beneficial to them, and whether or not there were

components that were more beneficial than others. The nine participants were evenly split in their responses to this question. Four of the respondents indicated that the pre-conference meeting was the most beneficial component of the evaluative feedback process. One of the teacher-participants offered the following:

*That's difficult because you look at all 3 and they all play such important parts in a process...so, I would almost recommend in my opinion that the pre-conference is the most beneficial because it can kind of give you a different lens and an avenue so when you go into the observation and then the post observation you're much more aware and targeting certain areas that maybe you feel is a weakness that you potentially could have.*

Conversely, four of the respondents indicated that the post-conference meeting was the most beneficial component of the evaluative feedback process. One teacher-participant stated:

*As much as I appreciate the pre-conference, and I think it is a valid point, if I have to pick, I would say the post-conference is more important to me because I'd rather you see me in a completely authentic state and provide criticism based on that. And I think that we have a pretty valid conversation afterwards about what needs to be improved on and what is going well in the classroom. I appreciate the time you put into both, but I think the post conference is probably more appreciated in my role.*

One of the respondents indicated that both the pre-conference and post-conference meetings were equally important, citing the value that they identify with and appreciate most in each component of the process. The teacher-participant offered the following:

*I hate to be overly diplomatic, but obviously the pre-conference is benefitting that particular aspect of teaching – the whole planning stage – and it's almost like you're observing, you're helping us create the ideal lesson, and if all things were equal this is*

*how I would be driving the lesson. You can give us feedback on which ways would be most beneficial, which things kind of make sense in the context of the school, and everything like that. Whereas, the post-conference is the reality and even though I want my lesson to go this way, things happen. Kids are absent, kids are off tasks for whatever reason, a kid comes in with a bad day. All those things can happen and having that post-conference time to debrief and kind of come back to reality and say, "Okay, well that is what you wanted to do, this is why it didn't happen. Let's talk about why it didn't happen. Let's talk about ways to get closer to that ideal next time." So, they're kind of apples and oranges.*

Question 8 from the professional conversation included multiple parts. It asked respondents if the ultimate goal of teacher evaluation and supervision is to improve classroom instruction: 1) How can we (teachers and administrators) better cultivate a culture of supervision that supports instructional change within the classroom setting? 2) How might the evaluation process that we follow be altered to better support a culture of supervision? 3) How might the delivery of evaluative feedback be altered so as to better support a culture of supervision? The responses provided by the teacher-participants indicated that the culture of supervision that exists at Eden Middle School could be further nurtured by: 1) maintaining open dialogue between teachers and administrators, and 2) communicating the intention of the evaluation process and evaluative feedback with teachers. One teacher-participant offered the following:

*I think it is obvious that it's a dialogue that exists between us and since last year was just my first year going through this process, I can compare it to previous places and I know in the past, I've had, it was pretty much just a rubber stamp. That it's just kind of, "You did it and you kept the kids from being overly-destructive – Good job!" And then I've had*

*experiences where it was highly critical and it was just very questioning of everything that I did because the way that the administrator wanted it to be was the way it should be. I think that it continues to be a, like I said, a very open dialogue where it's, as long as you keep communicating that this is all about doing what's best for the kids and as long as that buy-in exists with all the teachers, I think it's one of the most effective methods that I've had. I know that my instruction has improved by talking with you and looking at what you've provided to me and from what I'm hearing, it sounds like that's kind of a lot of people's experience. So, I think kind of making sure that it remains this open discussion about improving teaching and improving student achievement, then it's going to continue to benefit down the line.*

The other eight participants agreed with the sentiments of this teacher. The only additional information that they shared was that the process was easier than they anticipated, that the process and the evaluative feedback makes sense and is worth the investment of time.

Question 9 from the professional conversation asked the teacher-participants what they valued about the current evaluation and supervision process, and what might make it more valuable. Excerpts from the responses of each of the nine teacher-participants follow:

**Teacher 1:** *I've never had a process that gave me specific recommendations for how to improve on issues X, Y, and Z and that had conversation...I viewed this as a part of professional development. I mean, this is a huge professional development so it's, I think it's to look at this through the lens of not strictly being about evaluation but it's also about development. This is the biggest lens shift for me.*

**Teacher 2:** *For me it was collaboration...I actually felt like it was worthwhile because I'm getting good feedback and getting good ideas for a lesson, it's not just me being evaluated by an administrator.*

**Teacher 3:** *You know when to focus on content when it comes up in the specific aspects of the domains, but when we need to look at wholistic instruction, you're providing the feedback through that avenue instead of just getting [bogged down] in the nuances of the lessons that are brought up.*

**Teacher 4:** *It's more comprehensive. With all the domains, as well as the sub components in there, I thought it forces any evaluator to look at the total package, not just be able to key in on a problem area or just celebrate some great success.*

**Teacher 5:** *I feel like our observations are part of this culture that's being established...I don't know if anybody else feels this way, but in the past I felt like observation lessons were, like, staged. Like, quasi-artificial. But because we've kind of started to have this culture of just expecting that people will come in and it's just one more formalized aspect of the culture that's already a part of the school.*

**Teacher 6:** *I didn't know what to expect and I thought it was going to be all criticism based. Not totally negative criticism but I didn't realize that, oh okay, you are going to look at the positive things too. So it made me feel more at ease that I still have things to improve upon, but there are also all these things that I'm doing well.*

**Teacher 7:** *I feel like it's because you make it, us feel more comfortable to just do what we're doing in our classrooms and that it's not going to be frowned upon or criticized in a negative way. We're willing to put ourselves out there and take risks in front of you*

*because you're accepting of those risks and you're appropriately constructive in giving us feedback.*

**Teacher 8:** *It's definitely a comfort thing...Like, I honestly remember the day I was observed. I barely even, like, thought about...I barely thought about it and I was like, "Oh, should I be way more worried about this than I am?" But honestly, it's comforting that you don't have to make this crazy lesson that you never would do on a typical day. You can just be you.*

**Teacher 9:** *But to that end, I remember one specific observation. I had planned to be at a certain point and the kids just weren't there yet and we had our pre-conference, and we talked about moving back our observation just because we wanted it to line up with what we had talked about and you were very flexible with that. So that is something that I attribute to the system and your willingness to do that is authentic in the sense that we were having the kids where they needed to be so that they could perform at their best. It wasn't about the lesson or the paperwork, it was about the kids.*

Responses to each of the questions posed to teacher-participants during the professional conversation have highlighted the following attributes of evaluative feedback and/or the evaluation process which the teachers-participants found to be particularly meaningful: 1) feedback is immediate, 2) feedback is specific and clear, 3) feedback is presented in a positive manner, 4) feedback is corrective, 5) feedback is constructive, 6) feedback supports the teacher's continual professional growth, 7) feedback is based on factual, observational data, 8) feedback prompts the teachers to reflect upon their own practice, 9) the feedback process includes professional dialogue between the teacher and the principal, and 10) the evaluative feedback could result in specific professional development, if need be.

## 5.0 CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study examined teacher perceptions of FFT evaluative feedback based on three research questions. The research questions include:

Q1: To what extent do middle school teachers value the evaluative feedback provided to them by their principal via the Framework for Teaching?

Q2: To what extent do teachers utilize the evaluative feedback provided to them by their principal via the Framework for Teaching?

Q3: What are teacher perceptions of the specific components of the evaluative feedback process that supports instructional change?

The conclusions that stem from the analysis of data respond to this action research study's research questions and help to achieve its goals, which are: to identify the reasons why teachers value and utilize evaluative feedback; understand the aspects of evaluative feedback that aid in the establishment of a community of practice and culture of supervision; and consequently develop a reflective professional development activity that informs the practice of teachers and administrators alike. These conclusions have several significant implications for practice, policy, and future inquiry. Several of these implications are discussed below, but it must be stressed that the ideas presented in this chapter are by no means exhaustive. They are, however, intended to stimulate thinking about how the insights from this study might impact the evaluative practices

that exist in schools. In addition, the specific recommendations that are offered also stem from the conclusions that have been generated through this study.

Chapter 5 is organized into three sections: practice, policy, and future inquiry. The conclusions, implications, and recommendations of this action research study fall into one, two, or all three of the three sections, as the conclusions, implications and recommendations cut across all three research questions. Ultimately, it is the hope of the researcher that the conclusions, implications, and recommendations serve to influence the culture of supervision that exists within the school environment.

## **5.1 PRACTICE**

The first iteration of this action research study has had major implications for the practice of the researcher. The methods utilized within this study (e.g. inventory and professional conversation) have become catalysts for change within Eden Middle School. These aspects of the research process have become the professional development activity that the researcher was hoping to develop as a result of the action research study itself. The researcher's professional practice has changed as a result of the methodology utilized within this study, and as a direct result, it is likely that the experience and practice of the teachers who work alongside the researcher at Eden Middle School will change as well. The changes in practice that occur as a direct result of this action research study speak to the development of a culture of supervision that supports instructional change.

**5.1.1 Conclusion 1: Teachers value and utilize evaluative feedback that is specific, positive, constructive, on-going, based on observational data, manageable, promotes reflection, includes dialogue, and results in professional development**

Data suggest that the teacher-participants overwhelmingly value and utilize both written and verbal evaluative feedback. These data are supported by the findings of Gutmann (2014), Marshall (2009), and Ovando (2005). More importantly, the ancillary questions that were asked as part of the inventory or during the professional conversation provided insight into the reasons *why* teachers value and utilize evaluative feedback. The data collected via this action research study indicated that the teacher-participants valued and utilized the evaluative feedback that they were provided with because it: was specific, positive, constructive, on-going, based on observational data, manageable, promoted reflection, included dialogue, and resulted in professional development. These characteristics mirror those that have been identified in the literature and cited within this study. (Brinko, 1993; Covey, 1991; Danielson, 1996, 2002; Danielson & McGreal, 2000; Feeney, 2007; Glickman, 2002; Gutmann, 2014; Little, 2009; Marshall, 2009; Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001; Ovando, 2005; Scheeler, Ruhl, & McAfee, 2004). Each of these characteristics were specifically mentioned by teacher-participants in the written response portion of the inventory, as well as during the professional conversation.

### **5.1.2 Recommendation 1: Seek professional development that relates to the value and utilization of evaluative feedback**

The researcher recommends that he participates in on-going professional development related to providing teachers with evaluative feedback that aligns to both the literature and the reported perceptions of teacher-participants. To do so, the researcher will seek out opportunities that will strengthen his ability to provide teachers with evaluative feedback that is meaningful, actionable, precise, and impactful (Khachatryan, 2015, Ovando 2005, U.S. Department of Education Office of Innovation and Improvement, 2004). Professional development will likely come in the form of trainings provided by intermediate units and the Pennsylvania Department of Education, in addition to the continual review of literature that relates to the conveyance of evaluative feedback. Furthermore, the researcher will continue to engage teachers in dialogue surrounding teaching and learning, as the professional conversation that occurred as a part of this action research study proved itself to be, in and of itself, a remarkably powerful professional development opportunity.

### **5.1.3 Conclusion 2: Teachers have differing perceptions of the most meaningful component of the evaluative feedback process**

Data suggest that the teacher-participants who participated in this study have varying views of the components of the evaluative feedback process. While all nine of the teacher-participants agreed that both the pre-conference and post-conference meetings were important to the evaluative feedback process, the teacher-participants were divided when it came to citing the most critical component to the cultivation of a culture of supervision that supports instructional

change. Four of the nine teacher-participants suggested that the pre-conference was the most beneficial aspect of the evaluative process. Four of the nine teacher-participants suggested that the post-conference was the most beneficial aspect of the evaluative feedback. One teacher-participant indicated that both the pre and post-conferences are equally important in the evaluative feedback process. It seems that this perception is distinctly a personal preference, as no identifiable pattern was discovered within the data.

#### **5.1.4 Recommendation 2: Administrators should provide meaningful, actionable, and impactful evaluative feedback at all stages of the evaluation process**

The researcher assumed that teachers would naturally perceive the evaluative feedback shared during the post-conference to be the most meaningful, actionable, and impactful. The data collected in this study has proven otherwise, which indicates that the researcher must attend to evaluative feedback during the pre-conference in a more thoughtful manner. Understanding that nearly 50% of the teacher-participants find the evaluative feedback provided during the pre-conference to be more pertinent to the development of a culture of supervision that supports instructional change suggests that ignoring or downplaying the importance of the evaluative feedback that can be conveyed during a pre-conference meeting could hamper one's efforts to cultivate a culture of supervision that supports instructional change. This recommendation aligns with Glickman's (2002) findings that suggest that constructive feedback can result in teachers becoming more reflective of their practices, and that this reflection permits teachers to plan for and achieve various goals.

### 5.1.5 Conclusion 3: Professional conversations are professional development

All of the teacher-participants indicated that the professional conversation that they participated in has the potential to improve the culture of supervision that exists within Eden Middle School. As one specific teacher-participant stated, *I think it is important to look at this [professional conversation] through a lens of not strictly being about evaluation, but it is also about professional development.* The teacher-participants reported that they valued having the opportunity to have collegial conversations about evaluation, instruction, teaching, and learning with both their peers and their administrator. This data point is supported by the findings of Gutmann (2014), Marshall (2009), and Ovando (2005), which indicates that teachers tend to value feedback that fosters professional dialogue with administrators but goes a step further by suggesting that the inclusion of colleagues in the conversation is also meaningful.

Another teacher-participant suggested that the culture of supervision that exists at Eden Middle School is shifting, and the mere fact that a professional conversation was occurring around the aforementioned topics, *Reflects where we're at...this conversation is strong indicator of where we're at.* The teacher-participants viewed the professional conversation as a meaningful professional development opportunity and a means of cultivating a culture of supervision that supports instructional change. Similarly, professional conversations conducted with teachers can assist school administrators in their efforts to improve the feedback that they provide to teachers. As suggested by Feeney (2007), the use of structured conversation promotes reflective inquiry and collaboration amongst teachers and administrators. Principals can learn a great deal about the nature of the feedback that is most beneficial to teachers by simply listening to the teacher who are recipients of the evaluative feedback.

### **5.1.6 Recommendation 3: Regularly conduct professional conversations with teachers**

Based on the discussion that occurred between the teacher-participants and the researcher during the professional conversation, it is recommended that the researcher invite teachers to participate in conversations around evaluative feedback, instructional practices, teaching, and learning on a regular basis during the school year. Each of the teacher-participants who shared their experiences with their colleagues and their administrator through this study unanimously recommended that the researcher regularly conduct professional conversations with small groups of teachers. These data align with the recommendations of Ritter and Barnett (2016), who suggested that meaningful conversations that stem from evaluation processes can result in a school setting in which teachers and administrators have regular conversations about improving instructional practice and student learning. The teacher-participants indicated that the researcher should conduct more professional conversations throughout the school year with smaller groups of teachers (four or five teachers per group) in an effort to continually improve the culture of supervision that exists within Eden Middle School. The researcher will provide the platform for small groups of teachers to engage with the researcher in a discussion stemming from evaluative feedback in this non-threatening manner in the next iteration of this action research cycle.

## **5.2 POLICY**

As discussed in Chapter 2, teacher evaluation practices and processes have changed dramatically in Pennsylvania over the course of the past decade. While Charlotte Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* (FFT) was selected as the overarching model of effective teaching throughout

Pennsylvania, there are many other models of teacher evaluation in existence throughout the United States (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2015). The findings of this study suggest that the professional conversation that originally occurred as a means of data collection is essentially a professional development practice, in and of itself. While the practice of conducting professional conversations with teachers is deserving of further inquiry (which is discussed in the next section), data surrounding this practice could add to the conversation about ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Framework for Teaching that is taking place at the state level (PDE, 2015b).

Conclusions and recommendations that inform both school board policies and state-level legislation are intertwined with those that inform practice. Specifically, the conclusions and recommendations that relate to professional conversation (Section 5.1.5 and Section 5.1.6) provide ideas that could inform policy related to the Framework for Teaching and teacher evaluation, overall. Relatedly, the next iteration of the action research cycle is the type of future inquiry that can continue to inform policy that speaks to teacher evaluation.

### **5.3 FUTURE INQUIRY**

The next cycle of the action research process will differ from the first in that the first and second research questions will be altered. These changes, which are discussed below, may result in a deeper and richer conversations about the value and utilization of evaluative feedback with the next group of teacher-participants. The analysis of the findings of this study, which were discussed in Chapter 4, have led the researcher to this conclusion and the resulting recommendation for the revision of the first two research questions.

This study has generated new interest around the development of trusting and respectful relationships amongst teachers and administrators. As previously mentioned, a climate of trust and respect amongst teachers and administrators is vital if the evaluative feedback provided to teachers by administrators is to be received and acted upon (Gutmann, 2014; Marshall, 2009; Ovando, 2005). That being said, examining the ways in which trusting and respectful relationships are developed and nurtured over the course of time would enable school leaders to more skillfully develop and nurture these types of relationships. Knowing that relationships that are based on mutual trust and respect have a direct impact on the perceived value of and utilization of evaluative feedback by teachers is cause enough for further research in this area.

Another implication for future inquiry stems from the evidence that suggests that teachers value the opportunity to have professional conversations about teaching, learning, and evaluative feedback with their colleagues and administrators (Gutmann, 2014; Marshall, 2009; Ovando, 2005; Rittner & Barnett, 2016). As mentioned earlier, the intention of the researcher is to conduct professional conversations with teachers as a part of the evaluative feedback process. This professional development practice is, in and of itself, an area for further research. A more thorough examination of the facets of this practice, which has been reported as highly valued by the teacher-participants in this action research study, could add to the conversation about teacher evaluation that is taking place at the state level. (PDE, 2015b).

### **5.3.1 Conclusion 4: Research question one and two must be posed as “why” questions rather than “extent” questions**

After analyzing the data and considering the understandings that stemmed from this study, the first conclusion that can be drawn is that the design of the first and second research questions did

not ask the *why* questions that needed to be asked. Fortunately, the methodology (inventory and professional conversation) included ancillary questions that elicited the responses that helped to answer the *why* questions, which were truly the interest of the researcher. As it is currently stated, the goal of the first research question is to examine the *extent* to which middle school teachers value evaluative feedback. Similarly, the goal of the second research question is to examine the *extent* to which middle school teachers utilize evaluative feedback. The inquiry process has underscored the difficulty associated with qualitatively determining the *extent* to which people value and utilize evaluative feedback.

While these questions were helpful in framing a portion of both the inventory and the professional conversation, being able to actually determine the *extent* to which teachers value evaluative feedback and utilize evaluative feedback is not as important, necessarily, as understanding *why* teachers value and utilize evaluative feedback. While the teacher-participants' responses provided clarity around the reasons why (or why not) teachers valued and utilized the evaluative feedback that they were provided with, research questions that are more precise may result in the accumulation of additional important data points.

### **5.3.2 Recommendation 4: Redesign research questions one and two**

In the next iteration of the action research cycle, it is the recommendation of the researcher that the first and second research questions be redesigned so that these two questions elicit a more direct response regarding the reasons *why* teachers value and utilize evaluative feedback, or not. While the current design of these two research questions eventually lead to a discussion of the reasons teachers value and utilize evaluative feedback (or not) a more straightforward approach to the line of questioning may lead to richer discussion and deeper reflection by the teachers and

the researcher/administrator. The round-about method for asking the all-important *why* question should not exist, as it could potentially stifle important conversation and confuse the participants and the researcher. Simple and straightforward questions which require the teacher-participants to explain *why* they value evaluative feedback (or not), and *why* they utilized evaluative feedback (or not) will streamline the inquiry process and provide for richer discussion (amongst participants and the researcher) and cleaner data analysis (for the researcher).

### **5.3.3 Conclusion 5: Professional growth amongst teachers and administrators are best situated within a relationship of mutual trust and respect**

As indicated in the literature, a climate of trust and respect amongst teachers and administrators is vital if the evaluative feedback provided to teachers by administrators is to be received and acted upon (Gutmann, 2014; Marshall, 2009; Ovando, 2005). While the themes of “trust” and “respect” were not specifically stated by any of the nine teacher-participants in the written portions of the inventory or during the professional conversation, the theme of “comfort” was. Teachers repeatedly mentioned feeling comfortable with the researcher and the evaluative feedback that the researcher provided. One teacher-participant stated, *You make it, you make us so comfortable to just do what we’re doing in our classrooms and that it’s not going to be frowned upon or criticized in a negative way. We’re willing to put ourselves out there and take risks in front of you because you’re accepting of those risks and you’re appropriately constructive in giving us feedback.* The other teacher-participants agreed with these sentiments, which indicates that the teacher-participants do in fact trust and respect the researcher and his efforts to deliver evaluative feedback that is meaningful, actionable, and impactful.

#### **5.3.4 Recommendation 5: Investigate the means through which trust and respect is established between teachers and administrators**

The relationships that exist between teachers and administrators can alter the potential impact that evaluative feedback has on classroom instruction. If teachers do not trust and/or respect the administrator who provides them with evaluative feedback, then the likelihood of the teachers utilizing the evaluative feedback to change their instruction is lessened. While Ovando (2003) suggested that principals get to know teachers as people and as professionals, not simply as an employee, further research regarding the development of trusting and respectful relationships amongst teachers and administrators is needed. If school administrators can make calculated moves in an effort to build and nurture trusting and respectful relationships with teachers, then the likelihood of teachers utilizing the evaluative feedback that they are provided with will increase.

Generally speaking, the findings of this action research study supports the researchers beliefs and actions regarding evaluative feedback. As a school administrator, the researcher will continue to engage teachers in conversations about teaching, learning, and evaluative feedback. In certain circumstances, these conversations will take place between the researcher and individual teachers, but as a result of this action research study, the researcher will also engage groups of teachers in these same types of conversations. Doing so will nurture the budding school culture in which dialogue amongst colleagues serves as a form of professional development.

During the next iteration of the action research cycle, the researcher also intends on engaging other members of the Eden School District administrative team in conversations about the evaluative feedback process. By sharing the initial findings of this action research study with

other administrators, the researcher is hopeful that they will begin to engage teachers in the same type of dialogue regarding thinking, learning, and evaluative feedback that is occurring at Eden Middle School. The conversation amongst administrators about these topics can serve as a means of on-going professional development for administrators in the realm of evaluative feedback.

## 6.0 REFLECTION

Ferrance (2000) wrote the following about action research: “It is not problem-solving in the sense of trying to find out what is wrong, but rather a quest for knowledge about how to improve” (p. 2). Immersing myself in the inquiry process and situating my study within the realm of action research has solidified my focus on the improvement of the culture of supervision that exists within Eden Middle School. This immersion has forever changed me as a learner, leader, and person. School administration is a difficult task that can bog one down in managerial-type tasks. I did not become a school administrator to serve as a manager. To the contrary, my main goal in becoming a school administrator was to be a highly effective instructional leader in an effort to make a difference in the lives of students and teachers alike.

While as cliché as that may sound, I have experienced, firsthand, the power of impactful teachers on the lives of students. I became an educator because I was so greatly impacted by one of my own teachers. Being able to leverage my position as a school leader in an effort to empower teachers to be as impactful as possible in the lives of their students is, quite literally, the best and most important aspect of my job. To do so, one must be committed to continual learning and continual improvement. It is through this mindset that a school leader can foster a culture of supervision in which teachers and administrators work cooperatively to continually improve practice.

When I became a school administrator, I never considered that an action research study

may one day serve as a vehicle for exacting change within the culture of supervision that exists within a school. I knew that I wanted to empower teachers and feel that I have experienced varying degrees of success in this endeavor up to this point in my career. On a personal level, I have found action research to be, as Sagor (2000) described, an empowering experience. It has been empowering because I have been able to utilize the findings of the action research cycle to enhance professional practice. An action research cycle, such as the one utilized within this research study, lends itself to the continual improvement and empowerment of teachers and school administrators. By reflecting on our own practices, discussing our successes, our struggles, and our misconceptions, and by learning in conjunction with one another, teachers and school administrators can greatly alter the schools in which they serve, and the students whom they serve.

This action research study has had a significant impact on my practice as a middle school principal. It has been an exercise in patience, determination, deep-thinking, and self-reflection. I feel that this research study is only the beginning of the inquiry process for my practice as a school leader. The process has helped me and the teacher-participants better understand what is happening in our classrooms and has aided in the identification of change that can be made to improve teaching, learning, and the culture of supervision that exists within our school. The qualitative data that is amassed via action research protocols can and should be used to guide the decision making process. I personally value action research because it has helped me to bring about informed change within my school.

The inquiry process (specifically, action research) is one that I will continue to engage in as a scholar practitioner and public educator. Engaging in the inquiry process through the lens of

action research has empowered me to control a facet of my own professional development. This action research study has also served as a means of empowering teachers to claim ownership over their own professional development. By making observations and reflecting on one's actions and the actions of others, we (teachers and school administrators) will be able to identify the dispositions, skills, and strategies that will enhance our practice as educators. By sharing our experience and knowledge with one another, and by grappling with new ideas in a safe and respectful environment, we will be able to bring about the kind of change within schools that will benefit students and, ultimately, society.

## APPENDIX A

### PDE DEBE-5501 FORM

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
 333 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333  
**TEMPORARY PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEE/PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEE RATING FORM**

PDE-5501 (4/05)

<b>Last Name</b>	<b>First</b>	<b>Middle</b>
<b>District/IU</b>		<b>School</b>

Satisfactory Service of employee sufficiently acceptable to justify continuation of employment.		Un satisfactory Improvement is essential to justify continuance in service.	
Signature of Rater: Position: <b>Supervisor</b> Date:	<b>20</b>	Signature of Rater: Position: <b>Supervisor</b> Date:	<b>20</b>
<b>I. PERSONALITY:</b> (encompasses those personal characteristics that directly influence professional performance.)	<b>20</b>	<b>II. PREPARATION</b>	<b>20</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exercises (prudent) judgment.</li> <li>• Maintains personal hygiene.</li> <li>• Maintains poise and composure.</li> <li>• Maintains professional attitudes.</li> </ul>	<b>20</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicates with parents about student's progress.</li> <li>• Demonstrates appropriate language usage.</li> <li>• Demonstrates a willingness to cooperate toward district goals.</li> <li>• Evidences planning which reflects objectives and activities.</li> <li>• Keeps abreast of subject matter and special practices.</li> <li>• Provides appropriate instructional material to meet the student's needs.</li> </ul>	<b>20</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates ability to organize for instruction.</li> <li>• Encourages students with appropriate reinforcement.</li> <li>• Provides an educational atmosphere consistent with instructional goals.</li> <li>• Provides for individual student differences.</li> <li>• Utilizes appropriate strategies.</li> </ul>	<b>20</b>	<b>III. TECHNIQUE</b>	<b>20</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates work/study habits.</li> <li>• Evidences communication skills.</li> <li>• Exhibits behaviors conducive to learning.</li> <li>• Participates in learning activities.</li> </ul>	<b>20</b>	<b>IV. PUPIL REACTION:</b> (student response to activities over which the professional employee has control.)	<b>20</b>

**Rating: Temporary Professional Employee**  
 I certify that the above-named employee for the period beginning \_\_\_\_\_ (month/day/year) and ending \_\_\_\_\_ (month/day/year) has received a rating of **SATISFACTORY**  **UNSATISFACTORY**

<b>Rating</b> (Total Category I, II, III, IV) _____ Seniority _____
---

**Rating: Professional Employee**  
 I certify that the above-named employee for the period beginning \_\_\_\_\_ (month/day/year) and ending \_\_\_\_\_ (month/day/year) has received a rating of **SATISFACTORY**  **UNSATISFACTORY**

Date \_\_\_\_\_ I.U. Executive Director or Dist. Supt.

Date \_\_\_\_\_ I.U. Executive Director or Dist. Supt.

I acknowledge that I have read the report and that I have been given an opportunity to discuss it with the rater. My signature does not necessarily mean that I agree with the performance evaluation.

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of Employee \_\_\_\_\_

**Figure 5. PDE DEBE-5501 Form**

## APPENDIX B

### PDE 426 Form

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania	DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION	333 Market St., Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333																	
<b><u>SEMI-ANNUAL EMPLOYEE EVALUATION FORM FOR INSTRUCTIONAL I TEACHERS</u></b>																			
Employee's Last Name	First	Middle	Positions(s) of Employee																
District/IU	School	Evaluator	Interview/Conference Date																
School Year:		Evaluation: (Check 1) <input type="checkbox"/> One <input type="checkbox"/> Two																	
<p>This form is to serve as a permanent record of an administrator's evaluation of a teacher's performance during a specific time period based on specific criteria.</p>																			
<b>PERFORMANCE EVALUATION</b>																			
<p>Directions: Examine all sources of evidence provided by the teacher and bear in mind the aspects of teaching for each of the four categories used in this form. Refer to the rubric language, checking the appropriate aspects of teaching, and indicating the sources of evidence used to determine the evaluation of the results in each category. Finally, assign an overall evaluation of performance, sign the form and gain the signature of the employee.</p>																			
<p>Category I: Planning and Preparation -- Through their knowledge of content and pedagogy skills in planning and preparation, teachers make plans and set goals based on the content to be learned, their knowledge of students and their instructional context. Category I reviews: Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy, Knowledge of Pennsylvania Academic Standards, Knowledge of Students, Selecting Instructional Goals, Designing Coherent Instruction, Assessing Student Learning, Knowledge of Resources, Materials and Technology.</p>																			
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>SATISFACTORY</b>		<input type="checkbox"/> <b>UNSATISFACTORY</b>																	
<p>Teacher's performance demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Adequate knowledge of content and pedagogy</li> <li>o Adequate knowledge of Pennsylvania's Academic Standards</li> <li>o Adequate knowledge of students and how to use this knowledge to direct and guide instruction</li> <li>o Appropriate instructional goals that reflect standards and reasonable expectations for students</li> <li>o Reasonable awareness of resources, materials, or technology available through the school or district or professional organizations</li> <li>o Appropriate instructional design in which plans for various elements are partially aligned with the instructional goals and have a recognizable sequence with some adaptations for individual student needs</li> <li>o Appropriate reflection on teaching and learning to enhance instruction</li> <li>o Appropriate assessments of student learning mostly aligned to the instructional goals and partially adapted as needed for student needs</li> </ul>		<p>Teacher's performance demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Limited or partial knowledge of content and pedagogy</li> <li>o Limited or partial knowledge of Pennsylvania Academic Standards</li> <li>o Irrelevant or partial knowledge of students and how to use this knowledge to direct and guide instruction</li> <li>o Unclear or trivial instructional goals and absence of expectations for students</li> <li>o Little or no awareness of resources, materials, and technology available through the school or district or professional organizations</li> <li>o Inappropriate or incoherent instructional design in which plans for elements are not aligned with the instructional goals, and have few or inappropriate adaptations for individual student needs</li> <li>o Little or no reflection on teaching and learning to enhance instruction</li> <li>o Inappropriate assessments of student learning not aligned to the instructional goals nor adapted as needed for student needs</li> </ul>																	
<p>Sources of Evidence (Check all that apply and include dates, types/titles and number)</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Lesson/Unit Plans</td> <td>See Attachment 426 A</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Conferences/Interviews</td> <td>See Attachment 426 A</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Resources/Materials/Technology</td> <td>See Attachment 426 A</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Observations</td> <td>See Attachment 426 A</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Assessment Materials</td> <td>See Attachment 426 A</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Resource Documents</td> <td>See Attachment 426 A</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Information About Students</td> <td>See Attachment 426 A</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Other</td> <td>See Attachment 426 A</td> </tr> </table>				<input type="checkbox"/> Lesson/Unit Plans	See Attachment 426 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Conferences/Interviews	See Attachment 426 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Resources/Materials/Technology	See Attachment 426 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Observations	See Attachment 426 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Assessment Materials	See Attachment 426 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Resource Documents	See Attachment 426 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Information About Students	See Attachment 426 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	See Attachment 426 A
<input type="checkbox"/> Lesson/Unit Plans	See Attachment 426 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Conferences/Interviews	See Attachment 426 A																
<input type="checkbox"/> Resources/Materials/Technology	See Attachment 426 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Observations	See Attachment 426 A																
<input type="checkbox"/> Assessment Materials	See Attachment 426 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Resource Documents	See Attachment 426 A																
<input type="checkbox"/> Information About Students	See Attachment 426 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	See Attachment 426 A																
<p>Justification for Evaluation</p>																			

Figure 6. PDE 426 Form

Figure 6 (continued)

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania	DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION	333 Market St., Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333												
<p><b>Category II: Classroom Environment</b> — Teachers establish and maintain a purposeful and equitable environment for learning, in which students feel safe, valued, and respected by instituting routines and by setting clear expectations for student behavior. Category II reviews: Teacher Interaction with Students, Establishment of a Learning Environment; Student Interaction.</p>														
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>SATISFACTORY</b>		<input type="checkbox"/> <b>UNSATISFACTORY</b>												
<p>Teacher's performance demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Clear and moderate expectations for student achievement with reasonable value placed on the quality of student work</li> <li>o Moderate attention to equitable learning opportunities for students</li> <li>o Appropriate interactions between teacher and students and among students</li> <li>o Effective classroom routines and procedures resulting in little or no loss of instructional time</li> <li>o Clear standards of conduct and effective management of student behavior</li> <li>o Safe and adequate organization of physical space, to the extent it is under the control of the teacher, that provides accessibility to learning and to the use of resources, materials and technology</li> </ul>	<p>Teacher's performance demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Low or unclear expectations for student achievement with little or no value placed on the quality of student work</li> <li>o Little or no attention to equitable learning opportunities for students</li> <li>o Inappropriate or disrespectful interactions between teacher and students and among students</li> <li>o Inefficient classroom routines and procedures resulting in loss of instructional time</li> <li>o Absent or unclear standards of conduct, or ineffective management of student behavior</li> <li>o Unsafe or inadequate organization of physical space, to the extent it is under the control of the teacher, to provide accessibility to learning and to the use of resources, materials, and technology</li> </ul>													
<p><b>Sources of Evidence</b> (Check all that apply and include dates, types/titles, and number)</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Observations</td> <td>See Attachment 426 A</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Visual Technology</td> <td>See Attachment 426 A</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Informal Observation/Visits</td> <td>See Attachment 426 A</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Resources/Materials/Technology/Space</td> <td>See Attachment 426 A</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Conferences/Interviews</td> <td>See Attachment 426 A</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Other</td> <td>See Attachment 426 A</td> </tr> </table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Observations	See Attachment 426 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual Technology	See Attachment 426 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Informal Observation/Visits	See Attachment 426 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Resources/Materials/Technology/Space	See Attachment 426 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Conferences/Interviews	See Attachment 426 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	See Attachment 426 A
<input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Observations	See Attachment 426 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual Technology	See Attachment 426 A											
<input type="checkbox"/> Informal Observation/Visits	See Attachment 426 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Resources/Materials/Technology/Space	See Attachment 426 A											
<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Conferences/Interviews	See Attachment 426 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	See Attachment 426 A											
<p><b>Justification for Evaluation</b></p>														

Figure 6 (continued)

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania	DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION	333 Market St., Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333
<b>Category III: Instructional Delivery</b> — Teachers, through their knowledge of content and their pedagogy and skill in delivering instruction, engage students in learning by using a variety of instructional strategies. Category III reviews: Communications, Questioning and Discussion Techniques, Engaging Students in Learning, Providing Feedback, Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness.		
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>SATISFACTORY</b> <span style="margin-left: 200px;"><input type="checkbox"/> <b>UNSATISFACTORY</b></span>		
Teacher's performance demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Adequate communication of procedures and clear explanations of content</li> <li>○ Adequate use of questioning and discussion strategies that encourage many students to participate</li> <li>○ Reasonable engagement of students in learning and adequate pacing of instruction</li> <li>○ Adequate feedback to students on their learning</li> <li>○ Adequate use of informal and formal assessments to meet learning goals and to monitor student learning</li> <li>○ Reasonable flexibility and responsiveness in meeting the learning needs of students</li> </ul>	Teacher's performance demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Unclear or inappropriate communication of procedures and poor explanations of content</li> <li>○ Ineffective use of questioning and discussion strategies and little student participation</li> <li>○ Little or no engagement of students in learning and poor pacing of instruction</li> <li>○ Inaccurate or inappropriate feedback to students on their learning</li> <li>○ Little or inappropriate use of formal and informal assessments to meet learning goals and to monitor student learning</li> <li>○ Inflexibility in meeting the learning needs of students</li> </ul>	
<b>Sources of Evidence</b> (Check all that apply and include dates, types/titles, or number)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Observations      See Attachment 426 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Student Assignment Sheets      See Attachment 426 A	
<input type="checkbox"/> Informal Observations/Visits      See Attachment 426 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Student Work      See Attachment 426 A	
<input type="checkbox"/> Assessments Materials      See Attachment 426 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructional Resources/Materials/Technology      See Attachment 426 A	
<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Conferences/Interviews      See Attachment 426 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Other      See Attachment 426 A	
<b>Justification for Evaluation</b>		

Figure 6 (continued)

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania	DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION	333 Market St., Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333	
<b>Category IV: Professionalism</b> – Professionalism is demonstrated through qualities that characterize a professional person in aspects that occur in and beyond the classroom/building. Category IV reviews: Maintaining Clear and Accurate Records, Communication with Families and Students, Contributing to School and District, Developing Professionalism.			
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>SATISFACTORY</b>		<input type="checkbox"/> <b>UNSATISFACTORY</b>	
Teacher's performance demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Adherence to school and district procedures and regulations related to attendance, punctuality and the like</li> <li>○ Knowledge of the Professional Code of Conduct</li> <li>○ Compliance with school or district requirements for maintaining accurate records, communicating with families</li> <li>○ Compliance with participating in school and/or district events and school or district professional growth and development opportunities</li> </ul>	Teacher's performance demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Failure to adhere to district procedures and regulations related to attendance, punctuality, and the like</li> <li>○ Lack of knowledge of the Professional Code of Conduct</li> <li>○ Lack of compliance with school or district requirements for maintaining accurate records, communicating with families</li> <li>○ Lack of compliance in participating in school and/or district events and school or district professional growth and development opportunities</li> </ul>		
<b>Sources of Evidence</b> (Check all that apply and include dates, types/titles, and number)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Conferences/Interviews <input type="checkbox"/> Observations/Visual Technology <input type="checkbox"/> Artifacts/Interaction with Family <input type="checkbox"/> Student Records/Grade Book	See Attachment 426 A See Attachment 426 A See Attachment 426 A See Attachment 426 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Progress Reports/Report Cards <input type="checkbox"/> Parent/School/Community Feedback <input type="checkbox"/> Artifacts: Professional Development/Act 48 Documentation <input type="checkbox"/> Perceptive Use of Teaching/Learning Reflections <input type="checkbox"/> Other	See Attachment 426 A See Attachment 426 A See Attachment 426 A See Attachment 426 A See Attachment 426 A
<b>Justification for Evaluation</b>			

Figure 6 (continued)

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania	DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION	333 Market St., Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333
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I certify that the before named employee for the period beginning \_\_\_\_\_ (month/day/year) and ending \_\_\_\_\_ (month/day/year) has been evaluated with a overall level of proficiency that is:  Satisfactory;  Unsatisfactory

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Principal/Assistant Principal  
(Evaluator)

Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Superintendent or I. U. Executive Director

Date

**Overall Justification for Evaluation**

**Commendations (optional)**

**Professional Development Areas:**

Name of Employee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Employee

Date

## APPENDIX C

### PDE 427 FORM

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

333 Market St., Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

#### INSTRUCTIONAL I TO INSTRUCTIONAL II ASSESSMENT FORM

Applicant's Last Name	First	Middle	Positions(s) of Employee
District/IU	School	Evaluator	Interview/Conference Date

**Directions:** This form is used after having reviewed 6 satisfactory semi-annual employee evaluations of the teacher's performance. All categories in this form must be assessed as well as all sources of evidence provided by the teacher. The evaluator should bear in mind the aspects of teaching for each category and refer to the rubric language. If applicable, record commendations. Finally, assign an overall assessment, sign the form and gain Superintendent's review and signature.

**Category I: Planning/Preparation**--Through their knowledge of content and pedagogy skills in planning and preparation, teachers make plans and set goals based on the content to be learned, their knowledge of students and their instructional context. **Category I reviews: Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy, Knowledge of Pennsylvania Academic Standards, Knowledge of Students, Selecting Instructional Goals, Designing Coherent Instruction, Assessing Student Learning, Knowledge of Resources, Materials and Technology.**

Teacher's performance demonstrates:

- In-depth and thorough knowledge of content and pedagogy
- In-depth and thorough knowledge of Pennsylvania's Academic Standards
- In-depth and thorough knowledge of students and how to use this knowledge to inform instruction
- Clear and appropriate instructional goals that reflect content standards and high expectations for students
- Thorough awareness of resources, materials, and technology available through the school or district or professional organizations
- Appropriate and coherent instructional design in which plans for all elements are completely aligned with the instructional goals, have a clear sequence, and include adaptations for individual student needs
- Appropriate and clear assessments of student learning completely aligned to the instructional goals, and adapted as required for student needs

**Sources of Evidence** (Check all that apply and include dates, types/titles and number)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lesson/Unit Plans _____             | <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Conferences/Interviews _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resources/Material/Technology _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Observations _____         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assessment Materials _____          | <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Resource Documents _____     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information About Students _____    | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                          |

**Assessment of Category I Factors (Discussion)**

Figure 7. PDE 427 Form

Figure 7 (continued)

<p><b>Category II: Classroom Environment</b> --Teachers establish and maintain a purposeful and equitable environment for learning, in which students feel safe, valued, and respected by instituting routines and setting clear expectations for student behavior. Category II reviews: Teacher Interaction with Students, Establishment of a Learning Environment, Student Interaction.</p>								
<p>Teacher's performance demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o High and clear expectations for student achievement in a challenging and dynamic learning environment, with value placed on high quality student work</li> <li>o Significant attention to equitable learning opportunities for students</li> <li>o Appropriate and highly respectful interactions between teacher and students and among students</li> <li>o Highly effective classroom routines and procedures resulting in effective use of instructional time</li> <li>o Clear standards of conduct and highly effective and preventive management of student behavior</li> <li>o Safe and skillful organization of physical space, to the extent it is under the control of the teacher, that provides accessibility to learning and to the use of resources, materials, and technology</li> </ul>								
<p><b>Sources of Evidence</b> (Check all that apply and include dates, types/titles, and number)</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Observations _____</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Visual Technology _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Informal Observations/Visits _____</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Resources/Materials/Technology/Space _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Conferences/Interviews _____</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</td> </tr> </table>	<input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Observations _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual Technology _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Informal Observations/Visits _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Resources/Materials/Technology/Space _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Conferences/Interviews _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Observations _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual Technology _____							
<input type="checkbox"/> Informal Observations/Visits _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Resources/Materials/Technology/Space _____							
<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Conferences/Interviews _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____							
<p><b>Assessment of Category II Factors (Discussion)</b></p>								
<p><b>Category III: Instructional Delivery</b> --Teachers, through their knowledge of content and their skill in delivering instruction, engage students in learning by using a variety of instructional strategies. Category III reviews: Communications, Questioning and Discussion Techniques, Engaging Students in Learning, Providing Feedback, Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness.</p>								
<p>Teacher's performance demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Clear and appropriate communication of procedures and high-quality explanations of the content</li> <li>o Highly effective use of different levels of questioning and discussion strategies that encourage most, if not all, students to participate</li> <li>o High-level engagement of students in learning and appropriate pacing of instruction</li> <li>o Equitable, accurate, and constructive feedback to students on their learning</li> <li>o Informed and appropriate use of formal and informal assessments to meet learning goals and to monitor student learning</li> <li>o High degree of flexibility and responsiveness in meeting the learning needs of students</li> </ul>								
<p><b>Sources of Evidence</b> (Check all that apply and include dates, types/titles, or number)</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Observations _____</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Student Assignment Worksheets _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Informal Observations/Visits _____</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Student Work _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Assessment Materials _____</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Instructional Resources/Materials/Technology _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Conferences/Interviews _____</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</td> </tr> </table>	<input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Observations _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Student Assignment Worksheets _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Informal Observations/Visits _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Student Work _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Assessment Materials _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructional Resources/Materials/Technology _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Conferences/Interviews _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Observations _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Student Assignment Worksheets _____							
<input type="checkbox"/> Informal Observations/Visits _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Student Work _____							
<input type="checkbox"/> Assessment Materials _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructional Resources/Materials/Technology _____							
<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Conferences/Interviews _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____							
<p><b>Assessment of Category III Factors (Discussion)</b></p>								

Figure 7 (continued)

<p><b>Category IV: Professionalism--Professionalism is demonstrated through qualities that characterize a professional person in aspects occurring in and beyond the classroom/building. Category IV reviews: Maintaining Clear and Accurate Records, Communication with Families and Students, Contributing to School and District, Developing Professionalism.</b></p>	
<p>Teacher's performance demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Efficient and effective system for maintaining accurate and complete records consistent with school or district guidelines</li> <li>o Effective communication with families regarding student needs and development</li> <li>o Frequent participation in professional development opportunities, consistent application of new learning in the classroom, and sharing of learning with colleagues</li> <li>o Full commitment to professional standards</li> <li>o Full and active compliance with school and district policies</li> <li>o Perceptive reflection on teaching and learning and use of reflection to in future instruction planning</li> <li>o Full Knowledge of Professional Code of Conduct</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Sources of Evidence</b> (Check all that apply and include dates, types/titles, and number)</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Conferences/Interviews _____</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Reflection _____</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Observations/Visual Technology _____</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Artifacts: Interaction with Family _____</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Student Records/Grade Book _____</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Progress Reports/Report Cards _____</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Parent/School/Community Feedback _____</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Artifacts: Professional Development/Act 48 Documentation _____</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</li> </ul>
<p><b>Assessment of Category IV Factors (Discussion)</b></p>    	

Figure 7 (continued)

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

333 Market St., Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

Teacher's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security Number \_\_\_\_\_

I certify that the before named applicant for the period beginning \_\_\_\_\_ and ending \_\_\_\_\_ has received an overall assessment that is:

\_\_\_\_\_ Satisfactory \_\_\_\_\_ Unsatisfactory

(month/day/year)

(month/day/year)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Principal/Assistant  
Principal (Assessor)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of District Superintendent or  
I. U. Executive Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
LEA Name

**Overall Justification for Assessment**


**Commendations (optional)**



\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**APPENDIX D**

**PDE 428 FORM**

**EMPLOYEE EVALUATION FORM FOR INSTRUCTIONAL II TEACHERS**

Employee's Last Name       First       Middle       Positions(s) of Employee  
 District/IU       School       Evaluator       Interview/Conference Date  
 School Year: **2010 - 2011**      Evaluation: (Check 1)     One     Two

This form is to serve as a permanent record of an administrator's evaluation of a teacher's performance during a specific time period based on specific criteria.

**PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

**Directions:** Examine all sources of evidence provided by the teacher and bear in mind the aspects of teaching for each of the four categories used in this form. Refer to the rubric language, checking the appropriate aspects of teaching, and indicating the sources of evidence used to determine the evaluation of the results in each category. Last, assign an overall evaluation of performance, sign the form and gain the signature of the employee.

**Category I: Planning and Preparation** -- Through their knowledge of content and pedagogy skills in planning and preparation, teachers make plans and set goals based on the content to be learned, their knowledge of students and their instructional context. Category I reviews: Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy, Knowledge of Students, Selecting Instructional Goals, Designing Coherent Instruction, Assessing Student Learning, Knowledge of Resources, Materials and Technology.

<input type="checkbox"/> SATISFACTORY	<input type="checkbox"/> UNSATISFACTORY
Performance Demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ In-depth and thorough knowledge of content, pedagogy and Pa. Academic Standards</li> <li>○ Thorough knowledge of students and how to use this knowledge to direct and guide instruction</li> <li>○ Clear and appropriate instructional goals that reflect Pa. standards and high expectations for students</li> <li>○ In-depth and thorough awareness of resources, materials, or technology available through the school or district or professional organizations</li> <li>○ Appropriate instructional design in which plans for various elements are aligned with the instructional goals and have a recognizable sequence and required adaptations for individual student needs</li> <li>○ Appropriate assessments of student learning completely aligned to the instructional goals and adapted as needed for student needs.</li> </ul>	Performance Demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Limited or partial knowledge of content, pedagogy and Pa. Academic Standards</li> <li>○ Irrelevant or partial knowledge of students and how to use this information to direct and guide instruction</li> <li>○ Unclear or trivial instructional goals and low expectations for students.</li> <li>○ Little or no awareness of resources, materials, and technology available through the school or district or professional organizations</li> <li>○ Inappropriate or incoherent instructional design in which plans for elements are not aligned with the instructional goals, and have few or inappropriate adaptations for individual student needs</li> <li>○ Inappropriate assessments of student learning not aligned to the instructional goals nor adapted as needed for student needs.</li> </ul>

**Sources of Evidence** (Check all that apply and include dates, types/titles and number)

<input type="checkbox"/> Lesson/Unit Plans	See Attachment 428 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Conferences/Interviews	See Attachment 428 A
<input type="checkbox"/> Resources/Materials/Technology	See Attachment 428 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Observations	See Attachment 428 A
<input type="checkbox"/> Assessment Materials	See Attachment 428 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Resource Documents	See Attachment 428 A
<input type="checkbox"/> Information About Students	See Attachment 428 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	See Attachment 428 A

**Justification for Evaluation**

Figure 8. PDE 428 Form

Figure 8 (continued)

<b>Category II: Classroom Environment -- Teachers establish and maintain a purposeful and equitable environment for learning, in which students feel safe, valued, and respected by instituting routines and by setting clear expectations for student behavior. Category II reviews: Teacher Interaction with Students, Establishment of an Environment for Learning, Student Interaction.</b>															
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>SATISFACTORY</b>		<input type="checkbox"/> <b>UNSATISFACTORY</b>													
Performance demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ High and clear expectations for student achievement with value placed on the quality of student work</li> <li>○ Significant attention to equitable learning opportunities for students</li> <li>○ Appropriate and highly respectful interactions between teacher and students and among students</li> <li>○ Highly effective classroom routines and procedures resulting in little or no loss of instructional time</li> <li>○ Clear standards of conduct and effective management of student behavior</li> <li>○ Safe and skillful organization of physical space, to the extent it is under the control of the teacher, that provides accessibility to learning and to the use of resources.</li> </ul>		Performance Demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Low or unclear expectations for student achievement with little or no value placed on the quality of student work.</li> <li>○ Little or no attention to equitable learning opportunities for students</li> <li>○ Inappropriate or disrespectful interactions between teacher and students and among students</li> <li>○ Inefficient classroom routines and procedures resulting in loss of instructional time</li> <li>○ Absent or unclear standards of conduct, or ineffective management of student behavior</li> <li>○ Unsafe or inadequate organization of physical space, to the extent it is under the control of the teacher, to provide accessibility to learning and to the use of resources, materials, and technology.</li> </ul>													
<b>Sources of Evidence</b> (Check all that apply and include dates, types/titles, and number) <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Observations</td> <td style="width: 25%;">See Attachment 428 A</td> <td style="width: 25%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Visual Technology</td> <td style="width: 25%;">See Attachment 428 A</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Informal Observation/Visits</td> <td>See Attachment 428 A</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Resources/Materials/Technology/Space</td> <td>See Attachment 428 A</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Conferences/Interviews</td> <td>See Attachment 428 A</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Other</td> <td>See Attachment 428 A</td> </tr> </table>				<input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Observations	See Attachment 428 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual Technology	See Attachment 428 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Informal Observation/Visits	See Attachment 428 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Resources/Materials/Technology/Space	See Attachment 428 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Conferences/Interviews	See Attachment 428 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	See Attachment 428 A
<input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Observations	See Attachment 428 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual Technology	See Attachment 428 A												
<input type="checkbox"/> Informal Observation/Visits	See Attachment 428 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Resources/Materials/Technology/Space	See Attachment 428 A												
<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Conferences/Interviews	See Attachment 428 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	See Attachment 428 A												
<b>Justification for Evaluation</b> <div style="background-color: #cccccc; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>															

Figure 8 (continued)

<b>Category III: Instructional Delivery -- Through their knowledge of content and their pedagogy and skill in delivering instruction, teachers engage students in learning by using a variety of instructional strategies. Category III addresses: Communications, Questioning and Discussion Techniques, Engaging Students in Learning, Providing Feedback, Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>SATISFACTORY</b>		<input type="checkbox"/> <b>UNSATISFACTORY</b>	
<b>Performance Demonstrates:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Clear and appropriate communication of procedures and high quality explanations of content</li> <li>○ Highly effective use of questioning and discussion strategies that encourage many students to participate</li> <li>○ High-level engagement of students in learning and adequate pacing of instruction</li> <li>○ Equitable, accurate and constructive feedback to students on their learning</li> <li>○ Informed and appropriate use of informal and formal assessments to meet learning goals and to monitor student learning</li> <li>○ High degree of flexibility and responsiveness in meeting the learning needs of students.</li> </ul>		<b>Performance Demonstrates:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Unclear or inappropriate communication of procedures and poor explanations of content</li> <li>○ Ineffective use of questioning and discussion strategies and little student participation</li> <li>○ Little or no engagement of students in learning and poor pacing of instruction</li> <li>○ Inaccurate or inappropriate feedback to students on their learning</li> <li>○ Little or inappropriate use of formal and informal assessments to meet learning goals and to monitor student learning</li> <li>○ Inflexibility in meeting the learning needs of students.</li> </ul>	
<b>Sources of Evidence (Check all that apply and include dates, types/titles, or number)</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Observations	See Attachment 428 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Student Assignment Sheets	See Attachment 428 A
<input type="checkbox"/> Informal Observations/Visits	See Attachment 428 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Student Work	See Attachment 428 A
<input type="checkbox"/> Assessments Materials	See Attachment 428 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructional Resources/Materials/Technology	See Attachment 428 A
<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Conferences/Interviews	See Attachment 428 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	See Attachment 428 A
<b>Justification for Evaluation</b> <div style="background-color: #cccccc; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>			

Figure 8 (continued)

<p><b>Category IV: Professionalism</b> – Professionalism refers to those aspects of teaching that occur in and beyond the classroom/building. Category IV addresses: Adherence to School and District Procedures, Maintaining Accurate Records, Commitment to Professional Standards, Communicating with Families, Demonstrating Professionalism.</p>																							
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>SATISFACTORY</b>		<input type="checkbox"/> <b>UNSATISFACTORY</b>																					
<p>Performance Demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Full adherence to school and district procedures and regulations related to attendance, punctuality, and the like.</li> <li>○ Full knowledge of Professional Code of Conduct and full commitment to professional standards</li> <li>○ Full and active compliance with school and district requirements for maintaining accurate and complete records</li> <li>○ Full and active compliance with district requirements for communicating with families regarding student needs/improvement</li> <li>○ Full and frequent participation in professional development events/opportunities, consistent application of new learning in the classroom, and sharing of learning with colleagues</li> </ul>		<p>Performance Demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Little and/or irregular compliance to school and district procedures and regulations related to attendance, punctuality, and the like</li> <li>○ Little knowledge of Professional Code of Conduct and little commitment to professional standards</li> <li>○ Inefficient or ineffective system for maintaining accurate records that is not in compliance with school or district guidelines</li> <li>○ Infrequent or inappropriate communication with families to understand student needs and development</li> <li>○ Little or infrequent participation in professional development opportunities, little application of new learning in the classroom and little sharing of learning with colleagues</li> </ul>																					
<p><b>Sources of Evidence</b> (Check all that apply and include dates, types/titles, or number)</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Conferences/Interviews</td> <td style="width: 25%;">See Attachment 428 A</td> <td style="width: 25%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Progress Reports/Report Cards</td> <td style="width: 25%;">See Attachment 428 A</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Observations/Visual Technology</td> <td>See Attachment 428 A</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Parent/School/Community Feedback</td> <td>See Attachment 428 A</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Artifacts/Interaction with Family</td> <td>See Attachment 428 A</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Artifacts: Professional Development/Act 48 Documentation</td> <td>See Attachment 428 A</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Student Records/Grade Book</td> <td>See Attachment 428 A</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Perceptive Use of Teaching/Learning Reflections</td> <td>See Attachment 428 A</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Other</td> <td>See Attachment 428 A</td> </tr> </table>				<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Conferences/Interviews	See Attachment 428 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Progress Reports/Report Cards	See Attachment 428 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Observations/Visual Technology	See Attachment 428 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent/School/Community Feedback	See Attachment 428 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Artifacts/Interaction with Family	See Attachment 428 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Artifacts: Professional Development/Act 48 Documentation	See Attachment 428 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Student Records/Grade Book	See Attachment 428 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Perceptive Use of Teaching/Learning Reflections	See Attachment 428 A			<input type="checkbox"/> Other	See Attachment 428 A
<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Conferences/Interviews	See Attachment 428 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Progress Reports/Report Cards	See Attachment 428 A																				
<input type="checkbox"/> Observations/Visual Technology	See Attachment 428 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent/School/Community Feedback	See Attachment 428 A																				
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<input type="checkbox"/> Student Records/Grade Book	See Attachment 428 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Perceptive Use of Teaching/Learning Reflections	See Attachment 428 A																				
		<input type="checkbox"/> Other	See Attachment 428 A																				
<p><b>Justification for Evaluation</b></p> <div style="background-color: #cccccc; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>																							

Figure 8 (continued)

**Evaluation:**

I certify that the before named employee for the period beginning [ ] (month/day/year) and ending [ ] (month/day/year) has been evaluated with a overall assessment that is:  Satisfactory  Unsatisfactory  Commendable

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Principal/Assistant Principal  
(Evaluator)

[ ]  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Superintendent or I. U. Director

[ ]  
Date

**Overall Justification for Evaluation**

[ ]

**Commendations (optional)**

[ ]

**Professional Development Areas:**

[ ]

[ ]  
Name of Employee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Employee

[ ]  
Date

# APPENDIX E

## PDE 82-1 FORM

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania	DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION	333 Market St., Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333
------------------------------	-------------------------	---

### CLASSROOM TEACHER RATING FORM

**PDE 82-1 (4/14)**

Last Name	First	Middle
District/LEA	School	
Rating Date	Evaluation (Check One)	<input type="checkbox"/> Periodic <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-annual <input type="checkbox"/> Annual

**(A) Classroom Teacher Observation and Practice**

Domain	Title	*Rating* (A)	Factor (B)	Earned Points (A x B)	Max Points
I.	Planning & Preparation		20%		0.60
II.	Classroom Environment		30%		0.90
III.	Instruction		30%		0.90
IV.	Professional Responsibilities		20%		0.60
<b>(1) Classroom Teacher Observation and Practice Rating</b>					3.00

*Domain Rating Assignment* 0 to 3 Point Scale (A)	
Rating	Value
Failing	0
Needs Improvement	1
Proficient	2
Distinguished	3

**(B) Multiple Measures - Building Level Data, Correlation Data, and Elective Data**

Building Level Score (0 - 107)	
(2) Building Level Score Converted to 3 Point Rating	

(3) Teacher Specific Rating	
(4) Elective Rating	

**(C) Final Classroom Teacher Effectiveness Rating - All Measures**

Measure	Rating (C)	Factor (D)	Earned Points (C x D)	Max Points
(1) Observation and Practice Rating		50%		1.50
(2) Building Level Rating (or substitute)*		15%		0.45
(3) Teacher Specific Rating (or substitute)*		15%		0.45
(4) Elective Rating (or substitute)*		20%		0.60
<b>Total Earned Points</b>				3.00

Conversion to Performance Rating	
Total Earned Points	Rating
0.00 - 0.49	Failing
0.50 - 1.49	Needs Improvement
1.50 - 2.49	Proficient
2.50 - 3.00	Distinguished
Performance Rating	

\* Substitutions permissible pursuant to 22 Pa. Code §§ 19.1 (IV)(a)(5), (b)(2)(ix), (b)(3)(vi), (c)(3),

Rating: Professional Employee, OR
  Rating: Temporary Professional Employee

I certify that the above-named employee for the period begin \_\_\_\_\_ and ending \_\_\_\_\_ has received a performance rating of \_\_\_\_\_  
 (month/day/year) (month/day/year)

Distinguished
  Proficient
  Needs Improvement
  Failing

resulting in a final rating of:

Satisfactory
  Unsatisfactory

A performance rating of Distinguished, Proficient or Needs Improvement shall be considered satisfactory, except that the second Needs Improvement rating issued by the same employer within 10 years of the first final rating of Needs Improvement where the employee is in the same certification shall be considered unsatisfactory. A rating of Failing shall be considered unsatisfactory.

Date	Designated Rater / Position:	Date	Chief School Administrator
------	------------------------------	------	----------------------------

Figure 9. PDE 82-1 Form

## APPENDIX F

### INVENTORY QUESTIONS

Q1 Are you female or male?

- Female (1)
- Male (2)

Q2 Have you achieved tenure in Pennsylvania?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q3 Have you been evaluated via the Framework for Teaching prior to 2015?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q4 In an effort to identify an "area of concern," please review the five components of Domain 2 of the Danielson Rubric. An "area of concern" is a component in which you feel that you could improve, refine, extend, or expand upon. When considering your own instructional practices, which component is of the most concern to you?

- 2A - Establishing and environment of respect and rapport (1)
- 2B - Establishing a culture for learning (2)
- 2C - Managing classroom procedures (3)
- 2D - Managing student behavior (4)
- 2E - Organizing physical space (5)
- I am not concerned about any of these components (6)

Q5 You indicated that you do not have any areas of concern within Domain 2 of the Danielson Rubric. Please explain why none of the components of Domain 2 are of concern to you, as it relates to your instructional practice.

Q6 You indicated that you have an area of concern within Domain 2 of the Danielson Rubric. Consider the component that you selected. Please review the feedback that you were provided with in relation to this component. Did the feedback, which was provided to you by your principal, address your personal concerns with this component?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q7 Please explain how the feedback provided to you for your selected component of Domain 2 addresses the concern that you have with that specific component of Domain 2.

Q8 Please provide a specific example of the feedback that you were provided with for the component which you selected, which demonstrates how your concern was addressed for this component of Domain 2.

Q9 Please explain why the feedback provided to you for your selected component of Domain 2 did not address the concern that you have with that specific component of Domain 2.

Q10 Please provide a specific example of the feedback that you were provided with for the component which you selected, which demonstrates how your concern was NOT addressed for this component of Domain 2.

Q11 In an effort to identify an "area of concern," please review the five components of Domain 3 of the Danielson Rubric. An "area of concern" is a component in which you feel that you could improve, refine, extend, or expand upon. When considering your own instructional practices, which component is of the most concern to you?

- 3A - Communicating with students (1)
- 3B - Using questioning and discussion techniques (2)
- 3C - Engaging students in learning (3)
- 3D - Using assessment in instruction (4)
- 3E - Demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness (5)
- I am not concerned about any of these components (6)

Q12 You indicated that you do not have any areas of concern within Domain 3 of the Danielson Rubric. Please explain why none of the components of Domain 3 are of concern to you, as it relates to your instructional practice.

Q13 You indicated that you have an area of concern within Domain 3 of the Danielson Rubric. Consider the component that you selected. Please review the feedback that you were provided with in relation to this component. Did the feedback, which was provided to you by your principal, address your personal concerns with this component?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q14 Please explain how the feedback provided to you for your selected component of Domain 3 addresses the concern that you have with that specific component of Domain 3.

Q15 Please provide a specific example of the feedback that you were provided with for the component which you selected, which demonstrates how your concern was addressed for this component of Domain 3.

Q16 Please explain why the feedback provided to you for your selected component of Domain 3 did not address the concern that you have with that specific component of Domain 3.

Q17 Please provide a specific example of the feedback that you were provided with for the component which you selected, which demonstrates how your concern was NOT addressed for this component of Domain 3.

## **APPENDIX G**

### **PROFESSIONAL CONVERSATION QUESTIONS**

- 1) Were there any parts of the feedback that I provided you with in Domains 2 or 3 useful in helping you bring about any changes in your practices?
- 2) If “yes” to question #1, please provide a specific example of feedback that you were able to implement in your classroom.
- 3) If “no” to question #1, please explain what would have helped make the feedback you received more helpful.
- 4) How do you typically use feedback? In this case, how did you use the feedback? Did you ignore some of the feedback and act upon other feedback? Why or why not?
- 5) How can I improve the feedback that I provide teachers with so that it is more actionable and user-friendly?
- 6) Are there ways in which the evaluation process can be made more beneficial to you as a classroom teacher? Do you feel comfortable with and capable enough to make instructional changes based on the feedback that you are provided with, or is more and specific professional development necessary in order for these changes to take place?
- 7) The new evaluation system includes various steps, including: 1) a pre-conference meeting, 2) a formal observation, and 3) a post-conference meeting. How are these components of the evaluative feedback process beneficial to you? Are there components that are most beneficial? How/Why?
- 8) If the ultimate goal of teacher evaluation and supervision is to improve classroom instruction, how can we better cultivate a culture of supervision that supports instructional change within the classroom setting? How might the evaluation process that we follow be altered to better support a culture of supervision? How might the delivery of evaluative feedback be altered so as to better support a culture of supervision?
- 9) What do you value in the current evaluation and supervision process? What might make it more valuable?

## APPENDIX H

### EMAIL INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN INVENTORY

From: Anthony Mooney  
To: Potential teacher-participants  
Subject: Teacher Perceptions of Evaluative Feedback Inventory

Dear Colleagues:

I am writing to you to formally request your participation in my doctoral study, entitled, *Teacher Perceptions of Evaluative Feedback*. As a teacher who I have formally observed and evaluated this year, your input is particularly meaningful to this study. The purpose of the study is to investigate the impact and value of evaluative feedback on the pedagogical practices of middle school teachers and to investigate the possibility of effecting change in the classroom setting through the refinement of the evaluative feedback that is provided to middle school teachers. The findings of this study will inform a community of practice in which the capacity of relevant stakeholders to provide and act upon evaluative feedback is further developed and strengthened. Furthermore, the findings of this study will inform the development of a reflective professional development activity through which an assessment of the value of the evaluative feedback received by teachers informs the practice and process of administrators in providing evaluative feedback to teachers.

**To complete the inventory:**

The inventory questions that you are being asked to address can be found at the following link: [https://pitt.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV\\_6xotQw3lDjaWApT](https://pitt.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_6xotQw3lDjaWApT). It should take you no more than 20 minutes to complete the inventory. 1) You will need to access the feedback that you received on Domains 2 and 3 of your most recent formal evaluation documents (PA-ETEP) in order to complete the inventory accurately. 2) You will need to access and review Domains 2 and 3 of the Danielson Rubric. A copy of this rubric has been attached to this email. Participation in the study is strictly voluntary and confidentiality will be maintained via the University of Pittsburgh's Qualtrics electronic survey system. Your name will not be used in the study. Participants may withdrawal from the study at any time and for any reason. You will not be compensated in any way for completing the inventory. If you have any questions regarding the inventory or the study itself, please feel free to contact me via phone or email at any time. The survey will be open from January 29, 2017 until February 3, 2017. I appreciate your time and hope you will be a part of my study.

Sincerely, Anthony Mooney

[ajm235@pitt.edu](mailto:ajm235@pitt.edu)

724-350-3836

## APPENDIX I

### EMAIL INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN PROFESSIONAL CONVERSATION

From: Anthony Mooney  
To: Potential teacher-participants  
Subject: Teacher Perceptions of Evaluative Feedback Focus Group

Dear Colleagues:

I am writing to you to formally request your participation in the second stage of my doctoral study, entitled, *Teacher Perceptions of Evaluative Feedback*. The second stage involves a focus-group interview. As a teacher who: 1) I have formally observed and evaluated and 2) completed the Teacher Perceptions of Evaluative Feedback Inventory, your input is particularly meaningful to this study.

As a member of the focus group, you will meet with me and other teachers who I have formally observed and evaluated this year. The group will be asked a series of questions that relate to both the inventory and overall perceptions that teachers have of evaluative feedback. The focus group meeting should take no more than 45 minutes of your time. You will not be compensated in any way for participating in the focus group.

Participation in the study is strictly voluntary and confidentiality will be maintained via the University of Pittsburgh's Qualtrics electronic survey system. Your name will not be used in the study. Participants may withdrawal from the study at any time and for any reason. If you have any questions regarding the study, please feel free to contact me via phone or email at any time.

If you are willing to participate, please let me know via email, as soon as possible. I will set up a specific date and time that is agreeable amongst all willing participants. I hope that you will consider participating in this portion of my study.

Sincerely,  
Anthony Mooney  
[ajm235@pitt.edu](mailto:ajm235@pitt.edu)  
724-350-3836

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