

PRINCIPAL PERCEPTIONS OF COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS AND
THE IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHER EVALUATION

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DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirement for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

in

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

at

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SACRAMENTO

SPRING
2014

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PRINCIPAL PERCEPTIONS OF COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS AND
THE IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHER EVALUATION

A Dissertation

by

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Date

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my four daughters, Kara Pearson, Kiersten Pearson, Kendall Pearson, and Rylie Nelson who inspire me on a daily basis to keep moving forward. I continually strive to be a good role model to them I want each of you to know how important it is to never give up on your dreams and to keep moving forward even when times are tough. I love each of you; you are the reason that I even attempted this step in my education.

To my husband and best friend, Keith, I also dedicate this work to you. Without your unconditional love and support throughout this process, I would not have been able to complete this dissertation. You have been my rock and my place of refuge though it all. You believed in me when no one else did. I love you more than words can ever say.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to my committee chair, Dr. Frank Lilly, you inspire me to do great things. Thank you for the countless times you calmed me and showed me the way. Your leadership has undoubtedly been the driving force in this dissertation process. I chose you to be my chair because I knew you would appreciate the qualitative aspects of my work. To my surprise, you provided me so much more. You supported me when I didn't think I could continue, you pushed me beyond what I thought I could do and most importantly, you believed in me when I was starting to doubt my abilities.

I also thank Dr. Virginia Dixon who encouraged me to apply to the Doctoral program and for your expertise in Human Resources. I have enjoyed getting to know you and your work over the last five years. You are a role model for women in school administration.

Thank you to Dr. Kelli Hanson for the mentoring and coaching you have given me over the last three years. You are a role model to me as I navigate school leadership. You are an amazing principal and I admire you because your focus is and will always be what is best for kids.

Thank you to Dr. Steven Martinez, Superintendent of Twin Rivers Unified School District. I appreciate you taking this project on, even when your plate was already full. I am sincerely thankful to you for the leadership you provide for a district that needs you and your commitment to the community.

Cohort V, you have been my friends and family for three years. You all are amazing and gifted educators. I love you all!

Lastly, I thank the principals of Twin Rivers Unified School District for supporting my research. The data you gave me was rich and meaningful. Thank you for sharing your thoughts, beliefs, and stories with me; it provided a great deal of meaningful data that made my work complete.

CURRICULUM VITAE

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- Provide supervision for a student body of 1200 students on a year-round, multi track system
- Provide supervision and evaluation for six certificated staff
- Conduct informal walkthroughs with a focus on instruction and curriculum
- Work directly with the school principal to coordinate after school programs, professional development and staff training, and student body character education
- Awarded a grant that supplemental physical education

*Coordinator, Professional Development, Twin Rivers USD
2012-2012*

- Provided curriculum support and coaching to all district elementary teachers for reading/language arts and math
- Developed, organized, and provided training to district teachers and administrators on state adopted reading/language arts and math programs
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Abstract
of
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This dissertation describes a study assessing Twin Rivers Unified School District's school principals' attitudes towards various characteristics of teacher evaluation and compares perceptions among sub groups. Thirty-one building principals completed a survey which measured perceptions of four constructs of teacher evaluation that were selected from current educational theory: teacher evaluation should be founded in a partnership, differentiated for individuals, ongoing, and considerate of student learning outcomes. Principals were examined as sub groups according to gender, ethnicity, school culture, professional backgrounds, and years of experience. Descriptive statistics indicated that principals agreed that evaluation systems should be part of an ongoing cycle.

Might teacher evaluation be an opportunity to view a teacher's performance from a growth mindset? This mixed-methods study used survey data and interview data at a Northern California school district, to explore the following questions:

1. Which of the following or combination of variables are significantly related regarding principal perceptions about teacher evaluation for Common Core?
 - Gender
 - Professional Background
 - Age
 - Years as a principal
 - Ethnicity
 - School Climate
2. What are the perceived factors already impacting teacher evaluations by school site principals that relate to CCSS and do they transfer?
3. What are the perceived changes (by principals) that teacher evaluation must undergo in light of Common Core implementation?

The quantitative findings for Question 1 did not have a significant correlation between principal perceptions and variables on the survey. Questions 2 and 3, in a qualitative study, provided an opportunity to view principal perceptions of teacher evaluation through the lenses of Systems Theory (focusing on Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecology of Human Development Theory), Universal Design for Learning Theory, Appreciative Inquiry Theory, and Transformational Leadership Theory. The theories formulated from qualitative data, showed illustration of support that could lead to growth oriented teacher evaluation via:

1. The removal of barriers for principals as they evaluate teachers. For example, more time for principals to provide focused support for teachers and a non-punitive evaluation.
2. Change to current evaluation models by implementing a more growth-oriented evaluation process and principals leading with a multi-faceted leadership style.

This study concludes with policy and future research recommendations.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The adoption of Common Core Standards (CCS) in California will change the way an elementary school principal leads the school site. The standards in themselves are vastly different from any other adopted standards in California history. These standards will require teachers to change their pedagogy and will require students to collaborate, use critical thinking skills, and apply knowledge to “real-life” situations through an assessment called Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC). The CCS is a reform effort intended to ensure students graduate from high school prepared for college or a career, and be prepared to compete in a 21st century economy. This is more than merely a new set of initiatives to be completed in two years when more rigorous tests will be used and more meaningful teacher evaluation is in place. Rather, this is the new mission of public education (Wiener, 2013). The purpose of the Common Core State Standards is to prepare students to succeed in college and career pursuits. To that end, The Common Core calls on teachers to focus on deepening students’ understanding of what they are learning, enhancing problem-solving skills, and improving their ability to communicate ideas (Wiener, 2013). At the same time, states are putting in place policies aimed at increasing teachers’ effectiveness, the most prominent of which are rigorous teacher evaluations (Wiener, 2013).

School principals will be charged with leading the implementation of this new vision for education, which includes providing professional development, monitoring implementation including curricular changes and/or new adoptions, monitoring

student achievement, providing teachers with feedback, and communicating with families on the change their students are experiencing. With respect to teacher evaluation, the role of the principal is primarily to improve the performance of teachers (Twin Rivers Unified School District [TRUSD], 2009).

The role of a school principal in the process of supervision and evaluation is to support and improve a teacher's performance in a variety of teaching skills. The Common Core will require a radical change in teaching practices. States, counties, and districts should take a long look at how teachers are currently evaluated, specifically focusing on the role of the supervising principal.

In addition to supporting teachers, principals must also make summary judgments, depending on contractual language, about a teacher's professionalism and teaching skills. School principals may not be equipped to make these judgments if they themselves are not aware of the shift in pedagogy the Common Core State Standards require (Dewing, Perini, & Silver, 2012).

This dissertation will focus on examining the role of elementary school principals in the implementation of CCS and how their perceptions of CCS implementation affects teacher effectiveness and evaluation. It will take a closer look at current evaluation and supervision models in the Twin Rivers Unified School District and make recommendations based on Principal perceptions to create a transformational evaluation model.

There is little research on this topic, mainly because the adoption of CCS is a recent reform movement beginning in 2008 (Kendall, 2011). Research on this topic

will be helpful to school districts and school sites as they implement these standards effectively. Leaders in education should be aware of the scope of influence they have and how their perceptions can guide the school through this change with little or no negative impact.

Problem Statement

The Common Core Standards will require teachers teach differently, students learn and demonstrate mastery differently, and school principals to lead differently. Until now, education in California has been driven by standards requiring little creativity or critical thinking (Kendall, 2011). Teaching practices were mainly a reaction to the standards and instruction was being driven by assessments. Students were learning in the process; however, they continued to fall behind other countries in college and career readiness. The CCSS are standards that were created to do just that—create students who are ready to enter college without remediation and enter the job force above entry-level. As teachers begin to unwrap these new set of standards and implement strategies in their classrooms, they will need effective leadership from their principals. Most principals in California have been effective at managing the former California State Standards, analyzing state achievement data, supervising and evaluating teachers based on this data, and communicating with stakeholders regarding student achievement data (Kendall, 2011). In addition to many sweeping changes the CCSS will require, the role of the elementary school principal will change as well. This role change can either positively or negatively affect implementation and the implications are tremendous. In the event a principal cannot effectively lead a

school through this change, teachers will not be able to teach the standards, nor will students be able to demonstrate mastery. Students who cannot demonstrate mastery of CCS may not be prepared to enter college or the job market, thus creating a negative implication for the economy (Kober, Rentmer, & Center on Education, 2011).

Together, teacher effectiveness policies and the CCSS have transformative potential to significantly improve outcomes and equity (Kendall, 2011). Yet putting them into place quickly, simultaneously, and with integrity is a hugely demanding and complex endeavor. Currently, timelines are colliding placing an enormous burden on front-line practitioners. But managers at the state level have not been expected to reduce this burden by forging coherence across these policy priorities; more often, coordination is left to principals and teachers. This is an idea which will be expanded on later in the dissertation.

The timelines for implementing the CCSS and new assessments designed to measure students' progress towards college and career readiness in many cases conflict with the timelines for new teacher evaluation policies that heavily weigh the results of tests based on outdated standards. A similar conflict arises when evaluations are based on teaching frameworks pre-dating the CCSS which do not emphasize the instructional shifts demanded by the Core (Wiener, 2013). This sends a mixed signal to teachers regarding the system's priorities: focus on teaching old standards, or focus on transitioning to the Common Core?

Nature of the Study

The research questions guiding this investigation are as follows:

Research Question #1: Which of the following or combination of variables are significantly related regarding principal perceptions about teacher evaluation for Common Core?

- Gender
- Professional Background
- Age
- Years as a principal
- Ethnicity
- School Climate

Research Question #2: What are the perceived factors already impacting teacher evaluations by school site principals that relate to CCSS and do they transfer?

Research Question #3: What are the perceived changes (by principals) that teacher evaluation must undergo in light of Common Core implementation?

This study used a mixed methods approach to investigate the effect elementary school principals have on teacher evaluation in Common Core implementation. The researcher used a sequential exploratory, mixed methods approach. The quantitative research included a survey distributed to the K-8 Principals in the Twin Rivers Unified School District and analyzed to uncover existing correlations or relationships between variables. In addition, factors impacting teacher evaluations and perceptions of changes needed in teacher evaluations will be recorded using interviews and case

studies. Participants in the study were all K-8 principals in the Twin Rivers Unified School District. Of possible participants, six K-8 principals were interviewed about their perceptions of how teacher evaluation will be impacted by the implementation of Common Core State Standards. With information regarding emerging trends, the researcher used an online survey created using themes emerging from the interviews to collect further detailed data from other k-8 Principals in Twin Rivers Unified School District.

Summary of Theoretical Framework

Systems Theory, Universal Design for Learning Theory, and the Appreciative Inquiry Theory, guided this study. Grounded Theory was used to assess themes that emerged from the qualitative data. The connections between school principal perceptions of Common Core State Standards and the resulting impact on teacher evaluation are difficult to quantify. Factors such as life experiences principals bring with them to the job, make it difficult to gauge perception due specifically to teacher evaluation. However, through the application of theories used in the fields of professional development, educational psychology, psychology, and science, one may gain a greater understanding of how principal perception influences aspects of school leadership, such as teacher evaluation.

System Theory

Systems theory (ST) offers a broad view of all the system components and the ability to specifically attend to what each component does. ST is helpful in understanding how systems strengthening teacher performance can be applied to

improving teacher evaluation in a time of change. It is also an important way to keep student achievement at the center of all decisions made within the system.

Using ST through the lens of theorists such as von Bertalanfy (1968), Banathy (1996), Senge (1990), Pascoe (2006), and Bronfenbrenner (1979) allows the observation of the teacher evaluation system studied in this dissertation. The teacher evaluation system studied in this dissertation is the process and documents utilized with the Twin Rivers Unified School District. The focus of this study specifically, is the principal perceptions of the system in relation to Common Core State Standards.

Universal Design for Learning Theory

The Universal Design for Learning Theory (UDL) is an architectural design theory originated by Ronald Mace (2010) from the University of North Carolina. UDL ensures all visitors to buildings have appropriate access whether through wheelchair ramps or sunken curbs, etc. A relatively new UDL theory presented by Rose and Gravel (2010), offers equal opportunities for every student to learn. The theory stresses curriculum, instruction, and assessment designed in alignment with UDL theory is flexible and accessible, and best supports every learner. The pedagogical strategy or method should affect or modify the teaching, the student engagement, or the assessment. UDL is used in this study in Chapter 2 to analyze best practices in teacher evaluation for instructional strategies and assessment, and in Chapter 5 when presenting suggestions.

Appreciative Inquiry Theory

Appreciative Inquiry Theory (AI) was created in 1980 by David Cooperrider at Case Western Reserve University as part of his doctoral work in organizational change models. It was brought to the education field because it was a positive approach to making change based on utilizing core strengths as a foundation for innovation and growth (Cooperrider, Whitney, & Stavros, 2003). The word “appreciate” in Appreciative Inquiry refers to “the act of recognizing the best in people or in the world around us,” by focusing on our strengths and potentials (Cooperrider et al., 2003, p. 318). This can be accomplished through the use of Cooperrider et al.’s cyclical, four-stage creation cycle, used by stakeholders to create positive systems and discussed in Chapter 2.

A thorough discussion of Systems Theory, Universal Design for Learning Theory, and the Appreciative Inquiry Theory, and their relevance to this dissertation is continued in Chapters 2 and 5.

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership theory provides a more comprehensive means to investigate the effects of leadership style on citizenship behaviors than that of previous leadership styles (e.g., leader--member exchange, contingency, situational, path--goal). Previous leadership theories are based on transactions (exchanges), whereas transformational leadership theory is based on affective relationships transforming both leader and follower (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999). Transformational leadership theory differs from previous leadership theories in that a transformational leader must

perform some combination of traditional management functions (called transactional leadership), such as planning, directing, organizing, and controlling, to generate trust:

Transactional leadership emphasizes the transaction or exchange taking place among leaders, colleagues, and followers ... [whereas] transformational leadership involves inspiring others to commit to a shared vision and goals for an organization or unit, challenging them to be innovative problem solvers, and developing followers' leadership capacity. Transactional leadership occurs when the leader rewards or disciplines the follower, depending on the adequacy of the follower's performance. (Bass & Riggio, 2006, pp. 4, 6)

Only then can the transformational leader's functions of coach, mentor, and facilitator be used to augment transactional (i.e., traditional) leadership functions (Bass, 1985). The idea of transactional leadership provides a broad basis for effective leadership, but a greater amount of effort, effectiveness, and satisfaction is possible from transactional leadership if augmented by transformational leadership" (Bass & Riggio, 2006, p. 11). Therefore, a transformational leader must deal with others to build trust and respect (i.e., social exchange relationships) and then incorporate obligations beyond formal or written obligations (Blau, 1964) in a transformational way.

A transformational leader motivates people to work toward some higher purpose or goal, as opposed to influencing them into expecting an economic benefit. Transformational leaders develop covenants with others (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999). Covenants go beyond contracts in that organizational members accept the

organization's common values and beliefs as articulated by the transformational leader (Bass, 1985; Van Dyne, Graham, & Dienesch, 1994). This occurs because transformational leadership goes beyond transactional leadership; it is value centered and so promotes shared visions and values (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999). Transformational leaders promote value congruence by communicating the importance of organizational values that followers can believe are consistent with their own (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999). Furthermore, transformational leadership theory distinguishes between transformational behaviors and transactional behaviors (Bass, 1985). Transactional behaviors foster mutual trust and felt obligation through an exchange process, whereas transformational behaviors foster followers' willingness to look beyond their self-interests and make sacrifices supporting the organization (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999). Teachers can be especially susceptible to a breaking of trust between themselves, the principal or the administration because they accept the overriding burden of supporting and molding the young minds of the students as a higher calling, over and above any commitment to a school or school district. Thus, theory and research suggest that transformational leadership should promote the formation of the mutual commitment characterizing covenantal relationships. These relationships are necessary for principals to form, especially as they begin to evaluate teachers in the midst of sweeping change the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) will undoubtedly demand.

Operational Definitions

Academic Standard(s). Another name for Content Standard(s) (Weiner, 2013).

Accountability. The idea that students, teachers, administrators, schools, districts and/or states are held responsible for improving student achievement. This is usually measured through testing students on various individually state developed tests and 14 measuring the success rates of the students to either the state's average score (norm-referenced) or a score based upon success on the state's standards (criterion-referenced). Rewards and sanctions are then generally detailed in the form of labels to each student, school, and district. Other measures within accountability which could also be utilized include: dropout rates, attendance rates, longitudinal score range, percent tested, and student classroom work (Ravitch, 2007).

Achievement Gap. Persistent differences in achievement among different demographic groups of students as indicated by standardized test score results. The various demographic groups are based upon race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, English language learners, and students with disabilities (Ravitch, 2007).

Appreciative Inquiry Theory (AIT). AIT emphasizes a positive approach to facilitate change in an organization (Cooperrider et al., 2003).

Common Core State Standards. National standards created by a consortium of states in the areas of mathematics and English language arts/literacy (Ravitch, 2007).

Content Standard(s). Grade level standards explaining what each student should know or be able to do in each specific discipline. Usually found in the core

academic areas, but also utilized in fine arts, language, CTE, physical fitness, health, and other areas (Ravitch, 2007).

Educational Leader. One serving in a high-ranking educational position with the mission of elevating others to higher levels of expertise, motivation, and morality (Ravitch, 2007).

Formative Evaluation. Feedback as part of an evaluative process designed to assist professionals to perform to higher levels of mastery (Kendall, 2011).

High-Stakes Testing. Tests, usually criterion-referenced, resulting in rewards or sanctions of students, schools, and districts. The test results could prohibit grade promotion, graduation, or elective classes for students and negative labels applied to schools and districts which can result in mandated change, monetary sanction, and/or job loss (Ravitch, 2007).

National Standards. Agreement at the national level about what students are supposed to learn in a given subject area (Ravitch, 2007).

Pedagogy. How to teach, the act of educational practice (Ravitch, 2007).

Summative Evaluation. Feedback in the form of an evaluation provided to a teacher from an administrator for the purpose of judging levels of competence (Kendall, 2011).

Systems Theory (ST). For the purpose of this dissertation, a systems theory is a philosophy or assumption about a particular system's purpose, relationships, and productivity. It is also a methodology, or a concrete application of a theory in an attempt to facilitate design and/or systemic change (Senge, 1990).

Teacher Evaluation. The process by which teachers are observed in a school setting and provided with feedback that is reflective of their performance.

Observations occur during single lessons and are performed throughout the duration of a school year. The Evaluation is the culminating document that is based on observations, discussions, and reflections of performance (Marshall, 2005).

Traditional Evaluation. The processes by which teachers have historically been judged by administrators with the use of checklist instruments designed to rate the levels of observed or non-observed behaviors (Marshall, 2005). May also be referred to as teacher appraisal.

Universal Design for Learning Theory (UDL). UDL was originally used for designing and constructing buildings, homes, and products to accommodate the widest spectrum of users. UDL applies this idea to learning – that curriculum and instruction should be designed to accommodate all types of learners (Mace, 2010).

Limitations

Limitations are the limitations or violations of assumptions of methodology. The validity refers to the believability of the findings (Dereshiwsky, 1990). Roberts (2000) explains limitations are outside the control of the researcher. Some limitations of the internal validity are:

1. Some participating principals may not have read or are not familiar with the content, structure, or process of the common core state standards due to being new to the position or simply not keeping abreast of the changing national educational

atmosphere. Therefore, they may answer the questions with a similar perception of implementing the current state standards.

2. Participation of the Twin Rivers Unified School District Elementary School principals was voluntary, creating a selection-of-subjects threat to internal reliability (Wiersma, 1994; Yu & Ohlund, 2010). Consequently, respondents may not have been a valid representation of California public elementary school principals and therefore the researcher cannot generalize to all school districts.

3. Recent economic and cultural issues within California may result in economic, cultural, and socioeconomic biases in the principal perceptions of how implementation of common core state standards may impact their school.

4. A bias may exist because the researcher knows some of the participants. Although a bias may exist, the researcher feels the relationship she has with the participants may enhance the quality of the responses received with respect to interviews and surveys.

5. There may be confounding issues in the Twin Rivers Unified School District that could have an effect on principals' attitudes toward common core. In light of these issues, the results of this study cannot be generalized to all school districts.

Significance

The results of this study will be valuable to various groups. Principals will be able to see how their counterparts in various Twin Rivers Unified School District elementary schools perceive how the common core standards movement impacts their individual schools. This may create a starting point for a common dialogue for

implementation with regard to teacher evaluation. The research will be useful to principals because they will be able to use the information in order to implement a transformational evaluation process. Teachers will benefit from this research because their evaluators will be able to support CCSS instructional strategies, provide timely feedback on those strategies, and also provide teachers with quality professional development based on evaluation.

Colleges, universities, professors, and future administrators will be interested to see how current principals perceive the introduction of national common core standards impacting their elementary schools. The results can help professors influence the administrator preparation curriculum of colleges and universities, as well as help future administrators better understand the constraints of the job of elementary school principals in dealing with teacher evaluation.

The next several years are pivotal for re-orienting the culture of public education toward higher expectations for student learning and continuous improvement by educators. But inertia is a powerful force in the nation's classrooms; waves of policy reforms have come and gone, leading educators to adopt a "this too shall pass" mentality. If they are treated as separate and distinct initiatives, the Common Core and teacher effectiveness policies will be more easily dismissed as two more fleeting reforms to be out-lived (Wiener, 2013 p. 42). It is for this reason that this study could also inform California policy makers on the impacts of implementing and changing school accountability and teacher effectiveness.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

College and Career Readiness for all Students

In spring 2009, in an effort unprecedented in the history of U.S. education, governors and state commissioners of education from across the United States formed the Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSI) (Kendall, 2011). Systemic reforms, initiated by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB, 2008) fueled a charge towards a national standards coalition. Recently, CCSSI served as a cogent next step in promoting equity and excellence independent of a single test measurement (Kendall, 2011). The heralded Common Core State Standards (CCSS), a set of research based and evidential benchmarks, were adopted by 45 states in 2008. Although the federal government was not involved in creating them, it has encouraged the state-led project. Supporters assert the standards will better prepare students, while critics argue they amount to a national curriculum for schools, preempting the states. These standards were aligned with college and work assumptions and are thorough and globally standardized (Kendall, 2011). The standards reflect the essence of backward design: Conceptualize and construct the curriculum back from sophisticated “cornerstone” tasks, reflecting the performances that the Common Core Standards demand of graduates (Kendall, 2011).

Common Core State Standard include four essential learning and innovation skills, which are referred to as the 4Cs:

- Critical thinking;
- Communication;
- Collaboration; and,
- Creativity

The 21st century 4Cs outcomes were supported by standards/assessments, curriculum/instruction and professional development. These outcomes were designed to engage student learning and were symmetrical with the Partnership for the 21st century learning and innovation skills (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2011).

There is a cloud of controversy surrounding the Common Core State Standards initiative, primarily focused on who actually benefits from the initiative; Are students benefitting by graduating from high school ready to enter college and the workforce or are large publishing companies and politicians set to receive all of the benefits in a monetary form? This dissertation focuses primarily on principal perceptions of Common Core and how it might impact teacher evaluation. Included in the review of the literature are an explanation of the theoretical frameworks applied to research, a description of the history of Common Core State Standards, and a synthesis of teacher evaluation and principal leadership.

Review of Theoretical Framework

Systems Theory

According to von Bertalanfy (1968), Banathy (1992), and other foundational authors in the field, systems theory claims most things, people, and processes operate within a system. Most systems interact and depend on other systems; a system is an

evolutionary process (not a product). If one can recognize the systems in place, then systems theory can be used to benefit the way we interact with stakeholders, form relationships, and create processes to improve efficiency and promote learning.

Systems theory originated as a tool for use in the natural sciences, considering the human body as an open system using input of food and water and air, and creating output of energy. As an interdisciplinary tool, systems theory is also used in the social sciences. Open systems are open to input such as stimuli, information, and communication, whereas closed systems maintain themselves without accepting input or providing output (Bess & Dee, 2008). As an example of an open system, imagine a business that takes in resources from suppliers around the globe, uses manpower and energy, and creates widgets to sell to other countries. Education systems, by nature are open systems. They are open to the input from stakeholders that represent the educational community. Within the educational system the voices that have most input are politicians, state and county office of education, districts, communities, families, employees of districts, students, and individuals.

Several key systems are at work in this dissertation. One system is the teacher evaluation system as a directive of the Twin Rivers Unified School District and collective bargaining contract. Another system is the teacher evaluation system of each school in the district and all the teachers involved. Other systems include the classrooms teachers, and the county, state, and federal school systems, each one affecting teacher evaluation in the study and each being affected by the other systems in place.

The systems theory allows an observer of, or a participant in, a system to view all the system components and attend to what each component does. Systems theory also enables the observer or participant to monitor input and its transformation to output. In this case, an input could be principal perception and an output might be how the principal evaluates teachers. Systems theory allows the opportunity to observe changes in the system and its environment, as well (Pascoe, 2006; Senge, 1990). An example of a change could be the implementation of Common Core State Standards and the impact on principal perceptions (the input).

Peter Senge (1990) distinguishes the learning organization from traditional ones on the basis of the mastery of five disciplines. All five are concerned with a shift in focus from people as “helpless reactors” to “active participants” who create the future instead of reacting to the present (Senge, 1990). Yet Senge (1990) stresses that it is the fifth discipline which should be regarded as critical, since it provides the incentive and the means to integrate all four remaining disciplines together.

Senge (1990) describes personal mastery as the “discipline of personal growth and learning” (p. 141) He believes that the success of a learning organization often rests on the personal and professional development of its employees. While this includes attaining a high level of technical and professional competency, Senge (1990) believes that those in an organization need to be spiritually aware too.

Personal mastery is what Senge (1990) terms “the learning organization’s spiritual foundation” (p. 7). Stemming from the idea that an organization’s willingness and potential for learning can be no greater than that of employees, Senge’s (1990)

notion is described as the process of “continually clarifying and deepening our personal vision, of focusing our energies, of developing patience, and of seeing reality objectively” (p. 7). For Senge (1990), personal mastery is dependent upon what he terms a “creative tension” between vision (“what we want”) and an honest assessment of reality (“where we are relative to what we want”) (p. 142). For those capable of a high level of personal mastery, this tension is a highly positive force. They view reality as an “ally” and vision as “a calling rather than simply a good idea” (Senge, 1990, p. 142). Together the positive tension created by this dialectic drives the individual onwards in their learning. At this point, Senge (1990) sounds a note of caution:

Personal mastery is not something you possess. It is a process. It is a lifelong discipline. People with a high level of personal mastery are acutely aware of their ignorance, their incompetence, their growth areas. And they are deeply self-confident. Paradoxical? Only for those who do not see that the journey is the reward. (p. 142)

The notion of mental models stems from the widely acknowledged truth that many good ideas never get past the drawing board. Senge (1990) explains that a key reason for this is that they are at variance with people’s profoundly held “mental models” which reject anything untried or unfamiliar (p. 44). Senge (1990) suggests that creating a learning organization is impossible without a system in place for exposing, challenging and holding to account these assumptions and preconceptions.

Another essential component within a successful learning organization is the idea of shared vision; the common values, beliefs and goals of an organization. Shared vision is the difference between people doing work because they are told to and doing it because they want to (Senge, 1990). It is closely linked with personal mastery and the creation of creative tension, with Senge (1990) stating that personal mastery is the “bedrock for developing shared visions” (p. 211).

The discipline of team learning revolves around pooling knowledge, expertise and intellect to produce results which are beyond the sum of the individual parts (Senge, 1990). It begins with the practice of “dialogue”, “the capacity of members of a team to suspend assumptions and enter into a genuine “thinking together” (Senge, 1990, p. 10). At the same time, Senge (1990) suggests that dialogue be used to identify ways in which team members work against each other, using firmly entrenched defense mechanisms, harness this negative energy, and turn it to the team’s advantage. As Senge (1990) states, “if recognized and surfaced creatively, they can actually accelerate learning” (p. 10).

“Systems Thinking” is the so-called “fifth discipline”, the one which Senge (1990) believes brings the remaining four disciplines together, “fusing them into a coherent body of theory and practice” (p. 12). It states that you can only understand a system by stepping back and viewing it from a distance (Senge, 1990). Systems thinking is a “discipline for seeing the “structures” which that underlie complex situations, and for discerning high from low leverage change” (Senge, 1990, p. 69).

Senge (1990) identifies systems thinking as the discipline that presents the biggest problems for organizations wishing to progress towards a vision of a learning organization (p. 69). The problem stems from the way we develop mental models, the theories that we unconsciously develop about all aspects of life. This forces us into thinking about the world in terms of unidirectional models (Senge, 1990). That is, we interpret processes in simple cause and effect terms, rather than considering the interrelatedness of events.

Senge (1990) suggests that we are too used to looking at the effects of problems, rather than the causes. He recommends focusing instead on the root causes. This might not be immediately obvious, or the causes may not be connected directly to the effects of the problem. However, Senge (1990) argues that we can only succeed in building the learning organization, and allow people to develop effectively, by addressing outdated systems thinking (p. 12).

Universal Design for Learning Theory

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) offers equal opportunities for every teacher to learn because evaluation created in alignment with UDL theory is flexible and accessible. UDL theory could be applicable to all teachers, but for the purposes of this study it is especially applicable to recommendations to school districts that evaluate teachers and for teachers who might struggle on meeting the demands of the Common Core State Standards.

When utilizing strategies to support all teachers, it is helpful to consider the three Key Principles of Universal Design for Learning: (a) Represent – different ways

to represent essential core concepts, (b) Engagement – how teachers support students in class participation, and (c) Expression – how teachers support students when they are asked to demonstrate what they have learned (Rose & Gravel, 2010). The strategy or method, to be most effective, should affect or modify the teaching, the student engagement, or the assessment.

The Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST), a nonprofit research and development organization, works to expand learning opportunities, through UDL, for all individuals, especially those with disabilities. CAST states, “Individuals bring a huge variety of skills, needs, and interests to learning. Neuroscience reveals that these differences are as varied and unique as our DNA or fingerprints” (CAST, 2012). The theory is applicable to all teachers and the principals who evaluate them, but for the purpose of this study, it is especially applicable to recommendations for principals as they evaluate teachers who might struggle to teach, engage, and assess students under a new set of accountability standards.

In the field of higher education, two recent studies (Madaus, Scott, & McGuire, 2003) have demonstrated the success of Universal Design in the classroom. Research has shown students feel most successful in courses where clear and consistent expectations are set from the beginning, learning is treated as a process, and a variety of instructional strategies are employed by the professor. In the same way, teachers can also be more successful when their evaluator gives them clear expectations and respects them as learners as they navigate the Common Core, and a variety of evaluation strategies are used in the process. These strategies can include:

- Being approachable and available by inviting teachers to meet outside the class and demonstrating an honest interest in their learning.
- Offering clarity for both the expectations and content by following closely the evaluation system, providing teachers with outlines of expectations.
- Keeping professional development interesting and relevant with hands-on and group activities as well as making sure the content is presented in a clear and concise manner.
- Recognizing individuality in the teacher experience by being open to feedback and adjusting to important individual teacher needs such as learning disabilities.

Appreciative Inquiry Theory

Appreciative Inquiry is about the “coevolutionary” search for the best in people, their organizations, and the relevant world around them (Cooperrider, 2001). In its broadest focus, it involves systematic discovery of what gives “life” to a living system when it is most alive, most effective, and most constructively capable in economic, ecological, and human terms (Yballe & O'Connor, 2000). AI involves, in a central way, the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system’s capacity to apprehend, anticipate, and heighten positive potential. It centrally involves the mobilization of inquiry through the crafting of the “unconditional positive question” often-involving hundreds or sometimes thousands of people (Yballe & O'Connor, 2000). Taking all of these together as a gestalt, AI deliberately, in everything it does, seeks to work from accounts of this “positive change core”—and it

assumes that every living system has many untapped and rich and inspiring accounts of the positive (Yballe & O'Connor, 2000.)

Cooperrider et al.'s Appreciative Inquiry (AI) theory (2003) centers on the four D's – Discover, Dream, Design, and Destiny – a creation cycle; at the heart of the AI creation cycle is the positive core or positive question. The positive question begins the 4-D cycle. The 4-D cycle builds and keeps momentum moving around the positive question and provides a framework for continual learning. It constantly cycles back to the beginning of the process. Each “D” (stage) has a specific objective:

Discovery stage is an understanding of the "what is and what has been." The stage forms an appreciation and value for the topic of study. The group generates information about the topic and converses about understanding. The group begins to discuss what is working well in the learning process. The Discovery stage starts learning with a positive interaction. Teachers discover what it is about their practice that they want to focus on or what they would like to improve upon.

The Dream stage identifies "what might be" and focuses learners on areas for potential improvement and new learning outcomes. Teachers identify the areas of potential improvement in their teaching practice and set goals.

The Design stage helps determine "what should be." Individuals are encouraged to create possibilities or suggest positive changes to be implemented. Teachers, through the process of coaching and mentoring make a plan of improvement and how they can get there.

The Destiny stage provides a vision of "what will be." It is the final stage and is ongoing. Teachers and mentors keep looking forward, looking for opportunities to acquire new skills and knowledge that will help them reach their goals.

What makes AI useful as an educational theory is not simply the four D's, but the value principal's place on each teacher. This theory helps principals seek out and focus on teacher strengths and accomplishments. The 4-D process is guided by the belief that all teachers can bring varied strengths to work, school, organizations, relationships, and teams. Concepts and insights are personally meaningful because they are based on individuals' experiences and are easily relatable to the teachers' lives. AI is a theory based on mutual trust and safety between teachers and their principals. It is a "student-centered" approach emphasizing increased interpersonal, team building skills and higher-order thinking skills. The student (teacher) is taught to be responsible for his or her own learning (Yballe & O'Connor, 2000).

AI is a theory and practice for approaching change from a holistic framework. Based on the belief that human systems are made and imagined by those who live and work within them, AI leads systems to move toward the generative and creative images residing in their most positive core – their values, visions, achievements, and best practices (Watkins & Mohr, 2001). AI allows evaluating principals to create positive systems to meet the needs of their teachers, which in turn affects the educational needs of the students.

Appreciative Inquiry builds momentum and success because it believes in people. It really is an invitation to a positive revolution. Its goal is to discover

in all human beings the exceptional and the essential. Its goal is to create organizations that are in full voice. (Cooperrider, 2001, p. 12)

Evaluators have also been exploring the ways in which stakeholders' learning can be supported and sustained as they participate in evaluation processes (Forss, Rebien, & Carlsson, 2002). Being intentional about learning throughout the evaluation by encouraging dialogue and reflection; questioning assumptions, values, and beliefs and creating learning spaces and opportunities, individuals may come to more fully understand the evaluation, the organization or community, themselves, each other, and ultimately evaluation practice. The learning occurring as stakeholders participate in evaluation processes has been called "process use" by Patton (1997), who defines it as "individual changes in thinking and behavior, and program or organizational changes in procedures and culture, that occur among those involved in evaluation as a result of the learning that occurs during the evaluation process" (p. 78). Process use reflects social constructivist learning theory in that it focuses on how groups of people make meaning as they conduct an evaluation. The construction, interpretation, and integration of such new knowledge are based on the context of the situation and on participants' experiences (Bruner, 1971; Campbell, 2000; Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Interest in the process of evaluation capacity building has also been growing. The goal here is to help organization and community members understand and develop the knowledge and skills enabling them to think evaluatively and conduct more internal evaluations. Building evaluation capacity typically entails developing a system and related processes or practices for creating and sustaining evaluation

practice within organizations (Stockdill, Baizerman, & Compton, 2002). Evaluation capacity building is often based on participatory approaches to evaluation with an emphasis on learning from the evaluation process and its findings.

Current evaluation practices reflect approaches that are diverse, inclusive of multiple perspectives, and generally supportive of using multiple methods, measures, and criteria. In an effort to refine evaluation practice continually so that evaluation processes and findings are useful and acted on, evaluators continue to explore ways in which evaluation theory and methods can be more effective. Concurrently, evaluation process should always strive to maintain the integrity of evaluation's logic, process, and findings.

The model is broken into three parts: supportive environment, interaction, and engagement. All three parts reflect areas that may impact teacher evaluation. Consideration of AI theory helped ensure recommendations in this study are positive and appropriate for all members of the system. AI plays an important role in Chapter 5.

History of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS)

In order to fully understand the role of an elementary school principal in the evaluation of teachers on Common Core implementation, it is important to know how standards-based education transformed K-12 education in the United States (Kendall, 2011).

The movement for educational reform was an outcome of the public debate on social, economic and political issues ensuing from the release of a report by Peters and

Waterman (1982). Extended to the education sector, this debate resulted in a spate of national studies on excellence in education, following the release of the report by the National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983). Generally, the reports of these studies were critical of the poor quality of public education, recommending a variety of strategies to reform education, particularly at the secondary level. Two waves of reforms during the 1980s had significant impact on improvements through small-scale school reform projects and by decentralizing decision making authority to local communities, but failed to bring about national education reform. A multiplicity of trends in American education concurred in the early 1990s, leading conservatives and liberals to forge a consensus about focusing on what students should learn. From this consensus, the definition of national standards based on academic disciplines issued from the six National Education Goals expounded following the Charlottesville Education Summit convened by President George H. W. Bush in September 1989. Policy makers set nationally recognized groups in key academic disciplines the task of developing national standards consisting of content, performance and opportunity-to-learn standards (National Education Goals Panel, 1993).

In the early 1990s many local school districts across the United States were having conversations about the “new idea of establishing district-wide standards” (Kendall, 2011). Back then, it was typical for districts to be ahead of the curve; they could move with greater alacrity than the states and were eager to understand how standards might affect curriculum and instruction (Kendall, 2011).

The effectiveness of standards-based education depends heavily on the school as a system of learning with students as its focus (Kendall, 2011). It could not survive if teachers remained autocratic, using what they liked in the textbook and ignoring what they did not. This systemic approach appealed to teachers who believed their jobs were made more difficult by colleagues who taught only what they liked to teach rather than what students really needed (Kendall, 2011). Second, the national subject-area organizations, bent on ensuring essential concepts and skills of their disciplines were a part of every curriculum, emphasized the importance of agreeing on what all students should learn. Educators continued to generate greater potency for the standards movement as they asked themselves, “How much more effective could we be if we deliberately identified exactly what students need to learn during each step of their schooling?” (Kendall, 2011). Finally state departments of education began to turn the system taking standards as “true north” and aligning policy and reform efforts to help schools and districts reach shared goals for students (Kendall, 2011).

Drawbacks of State Standards

As with any type of wide-spread education reform, there are drawbacks hampering its effectiveness. Two major problems kept state standards from being the reform students so desperately needed. First, there were too many standards, and second, not enough curricula (Kendall, 2011).

The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics effectively initiated the standards-based movement with the publication of its mathematics standards in 1989, a work which implicitly argued it was educators, not the textbook or assessment

publishers, who were best equipped to identify what students should know and be able to do (NCTM, 1989). Other subject area groups quickly followed suit of the math teachers and began to publish their own drafts of standards (Kendall, 2011). Soon after, George W. Bush and the nation's Governors set ambitious education goals, including "student competency" across subject areas, and therefore set schools across the nation to receive additional funding in order to meet these goals (Kendall, 2011).

Prior to the standards movement, the textbook largely defined what students should learn (Kendall, 2011). The textbook was the curriculum; however, when standards began defining what students should learn, a sudden vacuum in curriculum support became apparent (Kendall, 2011). Standards were the main focus of reform, while curriculum support received little or no attention. School districts were "crippled" as they attempted to implement standards based instruction. The fact that each state developed its own standards and then created high-stakes assessments aligned to them put a premium on curriculum and instruction materials that targeted the specifics within a state standard (Kendall, 2011).

Each year, the amount of remediation students need in their first year of postsecondary education grows. Between 1995 and 2000, the proportion of institutions reporting an average of one year of remediation needed for students upon college entry increased from 28% to 35%, while the proportion of institutions indicating students needed less than one year of remediation declined from 67% to 60% (Parsad & Lewis, 2003). It is important to point out a system built on a foundation of identifying the

knowledge and skills students must acquire in a year has failed to determine what these students need to succeed in post-secondary education.

The failure of the standards-based movement is one reason the Common Core standards were developed. According to Kendall (2011), “The Common Core provides an established set of standards whose mastery will provide each student with the skill and knowledge to advance in study, whether a master craftsman, a biochemist, or a pioneer in a field of study that has yet to emerge” (p. 6). This initiative requires transparency and trust as the Common Core will drive change in the education system. Shifts in pedagogy will affect how principals lead their schools, which includes how they will evaluate teachers.

Pedagogical Shifts Demanded by Common Core State Standards

The Common Core State Standards will require teachers to acquire updated skills to teach in ways that emphasize the standards’ focus on problem solving and critical thinking. This creates a challenge of getting the nation’s 3.2 million K-12 public school teachers ready to teach these standards. The challenge, according to Sawchuk (2010), is “enormous” (p. 17).

With new assessments aligned to the standards rapidly approaching in 2014-2015, the implementation timeline is compressed. Teachers are wrestling with an absence of truly aligned curricula and lessons (Sawchuk, 2010). Added to those factors are concerns the standards are pitched at a level requiring teachers themselves to function on a higher cognitive plane (Sawchuk, 2010). According to Sawchuk (2010), teachers are weakest in the areas deemed critical to the Common Core State

Standards, such as instruction that supports critical thinking. Further, implementation of these standards will require a “deepening” and a “retraining” of entire teaching corps. In addition, there is evidence from a Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation study suggesting teachers already struggle to help students engage in higher-order, cognitively demanding tasks emphasized by CCSS, such as the ability to synthesize, analyze, and apply information (Sawchuk, 2010).

There are 12 distinct pedagogical shifts demanded by Common Core State Standards. There are six shifts in English Language Arts and Six in Math. These shifts will require teachers support their students, and in turn will require principals support teachers. This support comes in various forms, such as: professional development and teacher evaluation. Until recently, most teacher evaluation systems in this country did not measure or promote the ability of teachers to practice in the ways demanded by CCSS.

There are six pedagogical shifts in English Language Arts/Literacy (ELA/L). To begin, the CCSS will require that students read a true balance of informational and literary texts (Silver et al., 2012). The core standards for the first time will demand that 50% of the texts students encounter in kindergarten through 5th grade are informational text, meaning primarily text about science and history, text about the arts, the text by which students learn from the world (Coleman, 2011). Until recently, literature and stories dominated the elementary classroom thus causing schools to expand the literary block. The unintentional result was that literacy took up over 80 percent of the school day causing a destruction of history and science in the classroom

(Coleman, 2011). The Core Standards are a chance to regain the proper role of the elementary school teacher, to bring their students into the world, to spend equal time on informational and story, and in that way build a real foundation for literacy (Coleman, 2011).

The second shift in ELA/L is that students will build knowledge about the world through text rather than the teacher or activities. This shift will demand, not request, that the building of knowledge through reading text play a fundamental role in the disciplines of not only English Language Arts, Literacy, History, and Social Studies, but also science and technical subjects (Coleman, 2011).

The third shift is that students read the central, grade appropriate text around which instruction is centered. Teachers will be required to be patient, creating more time and space and support in the curriculum for close reading (Coleman, 2011). The real distinction in the growth of reading is the level of text complexity. For the first time, these core standards will create a “staircase” of text complexity, of expectations year by year of the level of text complexity that a student must master (Coleman, 2011, p. 3).

The fourth shift in literacy is a shift towards focusing on questions requiring students to pay attention to the text itself. Students will engage in rich and rigorous evidence based conversations about text and teachers will facilitate these discussions. Currently, there is an enormous amount of time that is spent with questions that “hover” around text but do not require the close consideration of the text (Coleman,

2011, p. 3). The new Core Standards will require teachers to teach students to return to the text to find evidence of their answer.

The fifth shift in ELA focuses on writing. With the new Core Standards, writing emphasizes use of evidence from multiple sources to inform or make an argument. The two most popular forms of writing in American Schools today are the exposition of a personal opinion and the presentation of a personal matter (Coleman, 2011). Unfortunately, society as a whole is not impressed if a person can write what he or she feels and thinks. What matters more are educated people who can make an argument based upon evidence, verifiable proof behind what a person thinks or feels, and demonstration of that knowledge (Coleman, 2011). The essential shift is that although the CCSS supports training in narrative writing throughout K-12, they also make “primary” the ability to write an argument based on evidence and convey complex information (Silver et al., 2012).

Academic vocabulary is the true language of power, especially for the English Language Learner. The Sixth shift ensures that students constantly build the transferrable vocabulary they need to access grade level complex texts (Coleman, 2011). The core object of study must be academic vocabulary pervading complex text of all types.

In addition to the shifts in English Language Arts, there are six shifts in math as well. The first shift is that teachers will significantly narrow and deepen the scope of how time and energy is spent in the math classroom. Teachers will be expected to focus deeply on only the concepts prioritized in the standards (Coleman, 2011).

The second shift in math is that principals and teachers must carefully connect learning within and across grades so students can build new understanding onto foundations built in previous years (Coleman, 2011). The coherence of the standards will be very clear, and will progress in a logical way.

Math fluency is the third shift. Students are expected to have a speed and accuracy with simple calculations. Teachers will be required to structure class time and /or homework time for students to memorize, through repetition, core functions (Coleman, 2011).

The fourth shift in math involves demanding a deep understanding of concepts. Students will deeply understand and will be able to operate within a math concept before they can move on to another concept (Coleman, 2011). Many times, when the lesson concludes, teachers simply move on to the next concept, regardless of whether or not a student has mastered it. This change will require them to learn more than the “trick” to get the answer right. They must demonstrate a conceptual understanding of the math (Coleman, 2011).

In addition to the shifts mentioned above, students are expected to use math and choose the appropriate concept for application even when they are not prompted to do so. This is a skill that is not highlighted in the current standards. Teachers will be required to teach these concepts in new and different ways. Students will also have to demonstrate practice and understanding in the math classroom. There is more than a balance between these two things- both must be occurring with intensity.

In summary, the Common Core ELA and Math standards will require students to “read like a detective and write like an investigative reporter” (Coleman, 2011). There will be a focus on deep mathematical reasoning and understanding, with intensity. In order for students to achieve this, teachers will have to radically change their instruction and principals will need to support them through professional development and a transformational evaluation process.

Principal Leadership

Schmoker (2006) discusses the many changes individual schools implement without measuring effectiveness or improvement. This "logic of confidence," or constant implementation of new initiatives without evaluation, takes time away from "authentic leadership in instructional improvement" concludes Schmoker (p. 31). Schmoker identifies two things mattering most, or that should matter most in schools: what is being taught and how well it is taught.

Supporting Schmoker’s premise, DuFour (2002) presents the need for schools to view the principal as the learning leader and not just as an instructional leader. Principals must carefully evaluate student learning and not just teacher performance. In this new role, the principal can focus on a teacher’s instructional strategies as a way to improve student outcomes.

According to Marshall (2005), the informal observation model of supervision places a sharp focus on what students are learning to determine if teachers are effective. Elmore (2008) states, "never have the demands for new skills and knowledge on the part of teachers and administrators been greater" (p. 89). He notes

little difference in the organization and culture of schools over the last two centuries, and further describes teachers as independent practitioners who do not have extensive opportunities to collaborate with other teachers (p. 92). Teachers have become used to teaching in their classrooms with little or no interaction with their co-teachers on campus. Many teachers have become so adept at teaching the lessons that they have for years that they have little need to converse with other teachers about practice. Ineffective lessons that never improve or have little impact on student achievement is an example of this phenomenon.

Elmore (2008) believes the next chapter of performance-based accountability requires teachers to improve their instructional capacity to improve student achievement (p. 125). Marshall (2009) believes improved instructional capacity can be achieved through effective supervision and evaluation. Bush (2009) discusses the features of collegial models, suggesting that "power and decision-making should be shared among some or all members of the organization" (p. 64). He states that collegial models are well suited for schools as teachers possess an "*authority of expertise*" (p. 65) and "decisions are reached by *consensus* rather than division or conflict" (p. 67). Bush's (2009) collegial model fits well with Marshall's (2009) approach of reflective conversations after informal observations as the discussion is designed to share power and ideas about a specific aspect of the informal observation. Bush (2009) identifies three leadership models that are "particularly relevant for collegiality" (p. 76). These three models include transformational leadership, participative leadership, and interpersonal leadership.

Transformational leadership focuses on school outcomes; participative leadership brings staff together; and interpersonal leadership "stresses the importance of collaboration and interpersonal relationships" (Bush, 2009 p. 79). The collegial model integrating transformational, participative, and interpersonal leadership provides the foundation for implementing a new observation model utilizing Marshall's approach to evaluating teachers. Leithwood (1994) identifies four specific areas leaders must focus on in schools: personal attention, helping others to solve problems in new ways, communicating high expectations, and model behavior.

Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) discuss the four dimensions of instructional leadership, concluding an instructional leader is a "resource provider, instructional resource, communicator, invisible presence" (p. 18). Marzano et al. (2005) identify 21 "responsibilities" of school leaders and how they correlate with student achievement. Monitoring and evaluating school practices has one of the highest correlations with academic achievement. He identifies specific behaviors and characteristics of school leaders to promote continual monitoring of the effectiveness of the school's curricula, instructional, and assessment practices, and to encourage continual awareness of the impact of the school's practices on student achievement.

Marzano et al. (2005) labels change in organizations as first- and second-order change. First-order change is slow and obvious while second-order change involves a "dramatic departure from the expected, both in defining a given problem and in finding a solution" (pp. 65-66). First-order change, as described by Marzano et al.

(2005), places the responsibility of monitoring and evaluating as the most important factor in managing this type of change.

In response to feedback from school principals about the limitations and complexity of the current evaluation model, the Needham Public Schools implemented first-order change by convening a committee to review models of teacher supervision and evaluation over two years. Consisting of seven members, including two principals, one assistant principal, three teachers, and the director of human resources, the committee represented administrators and teachers from elementary, middle, and high school levels. The first year included an in-depth study of the research on teacher evaluation. One principal, familiar with Marshall's (2009) evaluation model through her experience teaching educational leadership at Simmons College, suggested the committee evaluate Marshall's (2009) work, among others, in standards-based teacher evaluation (Danielson & McGreal, 2000; Tucker & Stronge, 2005). Because of the enthusiasm generated by Marshall's (2009) work, in the second year the evaluation committee focused on understanding the Marshall model through reading his articles and book. In addition, all members of the committee attended a full-day professional development workshop in 2010 where Marshall presented the informal observation model, and five of the seven members conducted a site visit to the Groton-Dunstable school district, which had implemented the model in all K-12 schools.

The final leadership and organizational theorists reviewed are Bolman and Deal (2008) and Gallos (2008). Bolman and Deal (2008) discuss leadership in the context of reframing or "deliberately viewing a situation from multiple perspectives"

(p. 37), and offer the human resource frame as one perspective. “Human resources theorists typically advocate openness, mutuality, listening, coaching, participation and empowerment” (p. 41); these qualities are at the heart of informal observations. The supervision process shifts from the context of evaluations and documentation of performance to that of reflective conversation where the supervisor asks questions and listens, to help the teacher’s professional growth. Bolman and Deal (2008) articulate that “*Human Resources Leaders Are Visible and Accessible*” (p. 41). School principals must be visible at their school sites. They should not only be visible in the cafeteria, playground, or parking lots during dismissal, they should also be in classrooms observing. In order to be the human resource leader, those observations should be frequent and meaningful. The informal observation model requires that principals observe teachers 12-15 times per year, and follow up each classroom visit with a personal conversation with the teacher. Gallos (2008) notes the ability of a leader to make sense of everyday situations. She states, “Sense making involves three fundamental steps: noticing something, deciding what to make of it, and determining what to do about it” (p. 163). Marshall (2010) has done exactly what Gallos has suggested—noticing that traditional models of evaluation are ineffective and developing an alternative method to measure effectiveness of student learning and enhance the professional growth of teachers. Yin (2009) concludes:

An important step in all of these replication procedures is the development of a rich, theoretical framework. The framework needs to state the conditions under

which a particular phenomenon is likely to be found...as well as the conditions when it is not likely to be found. (p. 54)

Transformational leadership characteristics are associated with teacher-principal relationships because of their affective nature (Bass, 1985; Van Dyne et al., 1994). Furthermore, transformational leadership behaviors and covenantal relationships involve shared values and an acceptance of the organization's mission. Transformational leadership involves engaging followers' terminal values and aligning them with the organizational mission and vision. Values, goals, and aims of an organization that, is dedicated to learning must be incorporated into a vision (Korkmaz, 2006). The vision created by the educational leader is important in order to generate a learning climate and increase the morale of the faculty and staff (Korkmaz, 2006). Individuals who are bound by covenantal ties are motivated not only by self-interest (a transactional leadership behavior) but also by the desire to act in ways ensuring the long-run success of the organization (Van Dyne et al., 1994). Principals behaving as transformational leaders motivate teachers to make sacrifices for the benefit of the students (Somech & Ron, 2007).

Perceived organizational support is based on individuals who tend to identify with the organization by the actions of formal policies and procedures and by nontraditional means (Fuller et. al., 2003). Perceptions of organizational support develop to the extent that employees interpret traditional and nontraditional policies as positive personal evaluations (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson, & Sowa, 1986).

School administrators must develop a systemic strategy to provide support for their faculty and staff (Drago-Severson & Pinto, 2006).

The more strongly a person identifies with the organizational goals and feels supported and valued, the less the individual will rely on extreme measures (e.g., legal sanctions) to resolve difficulties (Macneil, 2001) and the more he or she will be an active contributor to the community (Bass, 1985; Van Dyne et al., 1994). Therefore, for a covenantal relationship to exist, teachers and staff must believe their principals are committed to them and care about their well-being. Perceived support from administration officials is a positive force in promoting the faculty's contributions to a pleasant workplace (Somech & Ron, 2007)

Teacher Evaluation

Teacher supervision and evaluation has evolved over the past 300 years with the most significant changes occurring in the last three decades. Despite the changes and increased focus on standards, supervision and evaluation continue to be mediocre at best and limited in helping teachers change their pedagogy for the benefit of their students (Bridges, 1990; Harris, 1986; Howard & Gillickson, 2010; Tucker & Stronge, 2005; Wise, Darling-Hammond, McLaughlin, & Bernstein, 1984). Teachers, principals, and other administrators are burdened by a process relying on a limited number of classroom observations, steep demands of the administrator's time to complete necessary paperwork, and lacks evidence demonstrating the process actually improves professional practice (Danielson, 2009; Danielson & McGreal, 2000;

Darling-Hammond, 2010; Darling-Hammond, Amrein-Beardsley, Haertel, & Rothstein, 2012; Papay, 2012).

Current Models of Teacher Evaluation

The focus on standards-based teacher evaluation in the last decade, and the more recent shift from the principal as the sole assessor to a shared model where professional conversations are at the heart of learning and growth, has taken shape in the literature over the last several years (Danielson, 2009; Holland, 2004; Marshall, 2009b; Nolan & Hoover, 2010).

Danielson (2009) proposes conversations about teaching and learning which lead teachers to reflect on their pedagogy and work with students. Administrators who fail to engage in this powerful method “decline to take advantage of one of the most powerful approaches at their disposal to promote teacher learning” (p. ix). These informal, professional conversations help teachers think deeply about instructional strategies and to examine methods to improve student learning. Danielson (2009) argues traditional supervision models require a teacher to be passive while administrators observe the teaching, spend days writing their observations, and then control post-observation conferences by telling the teacher their observations and ways for improvement (p. 4). Danielson (2009) continues:

Of all of the approaches available to educators to promote teacher learning, the most powerful...is that of professional conversation. Reflective conversations about practice require teachers to understand and analyze events in the classroom. In these conversations, teachers must consider the instructional

decisions they have made and examine student learning in light of those decisions. There can be no doubt that conversation contributes to thinking. (p. 5)

Danielson (2009) reminds us students learn best when they are given timely, specific feedback based on standards. The standards clearly outline what needs to be done to improve. She argues the same holds true for teachers—the feedback must be timely and specific, based on standards (p. 10). Danielson promotes the role of administrators as “coaches,” when trust has been established and teachers view them as a resource (p. 26).

Danielson (2009) argues professional conversations must be built upon a shared understanding of essential ideas common among the staff in the school. These ideas set the vision and foundation for conversations; thus, school leaders must work with the faculty to focus on the most important and central ideas. Based on research and best practices, the shared culture is shaped by five guiding questions: (a) what constitutes important learning; (b) what causes learning; (c) how are students motivated; (d) what is intelligence, and (e) how do students’ views influence their actions (pp. 27-28). Danielson (2009) further provides several different topics for professional conversations after the principal or evaluating administrators have conducted a brief visit to a teacher’s classroom.

Nolan and Hoover (2010) similarly argue for collaborative, professional conversations between the teacher and principal. Older models, where the principal drives the process by providing all feedback and suggestions, assume the principal has

the content and pedagogical expertise. A teacher's self-evaluation, however, is an important part of the growth process, as is a discussion between teacher and principal of the teacher observation. Nolan and Hoover (2010) argue shared expertise is necessary for understanding the teaching and learning process. They further contend a high-performing model of teacher evaluation includes standards completely understood by both teacher and administrator (p. 19).

These standards for evaluations are differentiated among novice teachers, experienced teachers, and veteran teachers who are underperforming (p. 19). Nolan and Hoover (2010) outline several principles that are required for an effective evaluation system for teachers: (a) focusing on the broad responsibilities of teachers; (b) collecting data from multiple sources using multiple methods to base judgments; (c) providing comprehensive training for evaluators based on best teaching practices; (d) community participation in designing the evaluation model; and (e) ensuring compliance with local contracts.

The authors conclude teacher evaluation should be differentiated based on the performance of each teacher. Thus, teachers who perform at a high level should be evaluated differently than those teachers who underperform.

Professional Development

The most recent research on teacher supervision and evaluation has focused on teacher professional development as the method to improve performance in a standards-based environment (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Howard & Gullickson, 2010; Papay, 2012). Howard and Gullickson (2010) identify professional development

as one avenue to improve teacher effectiveness, but caution that the teacher's path of professional development must relate to the school's or district's goals, and not be left solely to the individual teacher's discretion. Howard and Gillickson (2010) also argue that for too long, teacher evaluation has been comprised of a series of behavioral outputs observed by the principal. They believe the evaluation system must measure the depth of the teachers' knowledge base and pedagogical skills, as well as their ability to work with a diverse student population. The authors further contend teacher evaluation has failed in many school districts for a variety of reasons, including the promotion of teaching styles that do not reflect research-based best practices, reliance on poorly-trained administrators, the failure to provide substantial follow-up, and the implementation of professional development goals inappropriately aligned to the school's and district's goals.

Informal Observations

Observing teachers while they practice their craft has been a staple of supervision and evaluation since the 1700s. The last decade has focused on observing teachers related to performance standards. Traditionally, classroom observations encompassed a full period, watching the teacher conduct a lesson from start to finish. Recent literature has articulated the value of shorter, more frequent observations of teachers (Holland, 2004; Marshall, 2005, 2006, 2009b; Milanowski, 2011).

It is important to distinguish the difference between informal observations and "walk-throughs", also referred to as learning walks and instructional rounds, developed in the 1990s. A walk-through typically involves an individual or group of

observers who tour classrooms or the entire school with focus on a specific aspect of instruction followed by a debriefing session with the building principal (City, Elmore, Fiarman, & Teitel, 2009; Odden, 2011). Downey (2004) states that walk-throughs are not intended to evaluate teachers but rather gather data on how teachers make decisions about instructional practices. In contrast, informal observations are time intensive, involving more frequent visits to the classroom and providing individual feedback to the teacher focused on evaluation and instructional improvement (Marshall, 2009).

Milanowski (2011) advocates for the use of walk-through as a method to evaluate teachers. These frequent observations of a teacher's practice provide a better picture of the typical classroom experience. Milanowski (2011) advocates school leaders, instructional coaches, and peers should engage in walk-throughs as a method for measuring instructional practice and competency. Peterson (2004) cautions about walk-through's limitations and thus best used as a means for gathering data. Limitations that could affect the data gathering capabilities include: lack of trust, resistant teachers, unclear processes and, lack of time. When these issues are addressed, the use of frequent, informal observations and classroom walk-throughs are a beneficial way for a principal to gather data on instructional effectiveness. It is a good way to get a pulse on the teacher as well, to evaluate whether or not professional development is effective, what areas they may need support, and a way to establish a relationship.

To measure productivity, Milanowski (2011) advocates for the use of a value-added approach to teacher evaluation in combination with teacher assessment methods. The value-added approach measures, through student assessment data, how effective a teacher is with a particular group of students, as compared to the expected growth of an average group of students with similar characteristics.

The work of Marshall (2005, 2006, 2009b) advanced standards-based teacher evaluation by using rubrics defining good teaching. Comparing the work of Danielson (2009) with evaluation models in several public and charter schools, Marshall (2009a) developed his own rubric consisting of domains, criteria, and a rating scale. The principal would observe teachers briefly in the classroom, in team meetings, and other school events. The informal observations in the classroom lasted 5-15 minutes, and were followed up within 24 hours by face-to face conversations. Teachers conducted a self-assessment under the same rubric used by the principal for summative evaluations. Teachers who failed to meet standards were informed well before the end of the year. The principal assumed responsibility for prescribing remedial steps.

In 2009, Marshall refined the teacher evaluation rubrics after conducting further research of five public and charter schools that had developed rubrics for supervision and evaluation. The new rubrics provided a clear path for teachers to understand areas needing improvement in order to reach proficiency and expert levels.

However, despite the decades of research devoted to teacher evaluation, no one clear method has emerged linking teacher performance to higher levels of student learning. Teachers are assessed throughout their careers, beginning as early as college,

and extending through student teaching, the licensure process, the job interview, and in the classroom. Yet none of these assessments have successfully predicted who will have the greatest impact about student's ability to learn (Kennedy, 2010). The most recent literature suggests frequent visits to classrooms with clear feedback for improvement may result in higher achievement (Danielson, 2009; Johnson, 2012; Marshall, 2009a; Milanowski, 2011; Papay, 2012; Taylor & Tyler, 2011).

The Value of Feedback

The importance of feedback is not a new concept in the field of education and the manner in which students receive feedback has been established as critical in the field (Black & Wiliam, 1998). Although feedback is commonly known to influence performance, evidence shows that the type of feedback and the way it is given can be differentially effective (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Generally, feedback with the largest effect size was corrective in nature, meaning its context provided students with an explanation of what they were correctly doing and what they were doing that was incorrect (Marzano et al., 2001). Absent from the published work was any reference to letter grades as a type of feedback. However, administrators, partly because of negotiated contracts between school boards and teacher unions, continue to engage in formal evaluation procedures that do not encourage the exchange of important feedback between principals and teachers (Schmoker, 2006). Such procedures often rely on teacher ratings in various categories but are frequently absent of constructive and meaningful feedback.

Principals who have attempted to transition in their roles from traditional organizational managers to school leaders have not followed suit in the purpose of providing ongoing feedback for teachers (Elmore & Fuhrman, 2001). Ironically, principals have directed teachers to provide their students with increased amounts of corrective feedback to help bridge the gap between where students are and where they need to be concerning learning targets, while placing less emphasis on letter grades. Principals consistently instruct teachers to provide students with continuous feedback relative to learning targets (Marzano et al., 2001). Research studies in this area point to the importance of prescriptive feedback in improving performance. Formative feedback has been identified as the most powerful single modification enhancing achievement (Black & Wiliam, 1998). Writing from the perspective of teacher-student feedback, Brookhart (2008) stated:

Students are less likely to pay attention to descriptive feedback if it is accompanied by judgments, such as a grade or an evaluative comment. Some students will even interpret judgment when the teacher intended description. Teachers should give students lots of opportunities to practice and receive feedback without a grade being involved. (p. 24)

If Brookhart (2008) is correct, couldn't the same principles be applied to principal-teacher feedback? Are teachers not also learners in larger bodies? Could one not look at what research has established and the opinions of experts and conclude students and teachers who receive high amounts of corrective feedback will make significant improvements? A teacher evaluation system should provide teachers with

useful feedback on classroom needs, the opportunity to learn teaching techniques, and counsel from the principal on how to make classroom improvements (Boyd, 1989).

The Work of Other Nations

Darling-Hammond (2010) contends there are not many school districts in the United States which support teachers in developing better teaching skills, in contrast to other high-achieving nations such as Finland, Korea, and Singapore. Darling-Hammond (2010) states the answer to improving student achievement, particularly in high-needs schools typically impoverished, is not in pay-for-performance models, but rather in a well-defined structure enabling practitioners to share effective practices with each other.

Darling-Hammond (2010) outlines the problematic areas with teachers who enter the profession, such as the varying level of preparation and skills, disparate salaries across the nation, placement of least skilled teachers in the poorest schools, higher class sizes in poorer communities, poor mentoring and induction programs, and the cost of undergraduate and graduate teacher preparation programs. She also states, “[Eighty percent] of the United States teacher’s time is spent with students, while teachers in high-achieving nations spend 60% of their time with students and 40% of the time planning, sharing or learning to improve their craft” (p. 201).

In contrast, Darling-Hammond (2010) notes, other high-achieving nations invest significantly in teacher preparation, training, and support and include the following:

- Universal, high quality teacher education at the government's expense. Teacher candidates in Finland, Sweden, Norway, and the Netherlands receive two to three years of graduate-level preparation at the government's expense, with a stipend for living expenses (p. 199).
- Mentoring for beginning teachers with fewer class sections to teach.
- Ongoing professional development with 15 to 25 hours of planning and collaboration with colleagues, and two to four weeks a year of institutes and seminars.
- Leadership opportunities for expert teachers.
- Equitable and competitive salaries (p. 198).
- Provision of 100 hours per year of professional development (p. 201).

Darling-Hammond (2010) recommends a standards-based teacher evaluation system requiring evidence showing that a student's performance improves as a teacher becomes more effective. A standards-based teacher evaluation model can also help with decisions about who remains in the profession, and which teachers should become mentors and coaches. Darling-Hammond continues by stating, "Professional standards hold members of a profession accountable for developing shared experience and applying it appropriately" (p. 219).

Perceptions of Principals

Conditions of teacher evaluation and feedback directly involve building principals who have the potential to understand what strategies might make a

difference in improving teaching and student achievement (Senge & Lannon-Kim, 1991). This can be partly attributed to the interactions administrators have with faculty and students, as well as additional internal and external stakeholders. However, delivery of feedback as part of the evaluation process has long been a point of contention. Educators have observed how teacher evaluation processes have evolved over time periods from simple end of the year checklists and summative narratives to more sophisticated clinical teacher evaluation models (Kersten & Israel, 2005).

Researchers Thomas Kersten and Marla Isreal (2005) surveyed 102 building principals in an effort to determine if principals perceived certain evaluation approaches to be more effective than others. Building administrators were asked to record the number of teachers they evaluated in a year and the average amount of time they spent per year on non-tenured versus tenured evaluations. They were also asked to rate the effectiveness of particular evaluation tools including summative checklists, summative narratives, pre-observation conferences, observation checklists, post-observation conferences, and portfolio reviews. Principals were surveyed on perceived benefits and impediments to such practices. The data indicated principals believed such evaluation systems are inordinately time intensive and preclude many other opportunities for school building leaders to work with faculty to improve classroom instruction (Kersten & Isreal, 2005). The study also revealed an underlying problem with the culture of public schools which impedes the evaluation process as a tool for professional growth. Administrators noted teachers typically expected to receive excellent evaluations and resisted evaluation methods that deviated from the status

quo. Some administrators indicated they did not perceive school cultures as likely to embrace something new in evaluation systems and did not value the process as a tool for improvement, but rather something that the teacher and administrator were required to endure (Kersten & Isreal 2005).

Conclusion

According to MetLife's *Survey of the American Teacher* (2013), America's educators strongly believe all students should graduate from high school ready for college and a career. Additionally, according to MetLife's 2009 survey, 86% of teachers believe setting high expectations for students will improve student achievement.

The new Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are strongly aligned with those sentiments. Based on evidence of the skills and knowledge needed for college and career readiness, the CCSS expect students to engage deeply in a wide variety of informational and literary texts in ELA/Literacy and to be able to both know and do mathematics by solving a range of problems and engaging in key practices.

However, for the CCSS to be implemented effectively to achieve the intended outcomes, principals, teachers, and other educators must have adequate supports and guidance. As Gail Connelly, Executive Director of the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), stated, "Principals and teachers must have access to the essential professional development opportunities they need to fully implement the Common Core, to transition to rigorous standards that strengthen

teaching and learning, and to develop effective strategies that engage families and communities in schools” (Harris Interactive, MetLife Report, 2013).

For elementary principals this means supports for planning, capacity building, and implementation. Elementary and middle school principals need assistance to ensure that they understand the requirements and have the resources for providing professional development to teachers, have access to the needed curricula, and have a chance to provide input into assessment protocols and procedures. The understanding and leadership of principals is essential to the success of the CCSS.

In addition to this understanding, principals must lead through change by supporting teachers with quality evaluation. In order to accomplish this, principals need to frequently walk through classrooms, offer timely feedback on what they observe, and provide professional development targeted to what teachers need. Through effective supervision and evaluation, principals can lead their teachers through uncharted waters and ultimately grow and sustain the professional growth of themselves and teachers through a transformational process.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This dissertation used a mixed-methods sequential approach. Chapter 3 describes research design, including the role of the researcher and a detailed description of the context, setting, sample, instrumentation, data collection, and analysis. The purpose of this study is to examine elementary school principals' perceptions of Common Core State Standards and the impact on teacher evaluation. Subsequently, recommendations will be made in order to examine and improve the practices within the K-8 school teacher evaluation process. The study attempts to determine what practices and policies the administration at Twin Rivers Unified School District could implement, revise, or eliminate based on perceptions of school site principals.

Creswell (2009) describes the mixed methods research approach as an approach to inquiry using qualitative and quantitative data in tandem. Mixed methods research offers potential for greater understanding of the complex nature of educational research. The quantitative component uses a comparative design, while the qualitative component uses an ethnographic approach. Studies restricted to quantitative analysis do not fully depict the unique demographics, histories, or voices of a group. Qualitative thinking generates insights about relationships within multi-level contexts, from multiple perspectives (Mason, 2006).

Mason (2006) asserts mixed methodology offers great potential for generating new ways of understanding the complexities and contexts of social experience. Lived realities are multi-dimensional and the phenomena must be viewed multi-dimensionally. Merriam (2009) expounds on the rationale for mixed methodology by reminding the reader the social world is not independent of individual perceptions; rather it is created through social interactions with the surrounding world. A mixed methods approach gives voice to the participants and explores the process of making meaning. For these reasons, the researcher is convinced a mixed methods approach is the best research design for this study.

Research Design

A quantitative comparative analysis was appropriate for this study because survey data will be used to determine whether there is a significant relationship between variables such as principal gender, professional background, leadership style, or school culture and the impact on how a principal might evaluate teachers who are implementing Common Core State Standards.

This study examined the relationship between the variables of perceived factors of teacher evaluation and Common Core Standards. Creswell (2009) suggests research questions and surveys are frequently used in social science research to inquire about the relationships among variables. In order to accomplish this, the researcher crafted a survey (see Appendix A) consisting of eight demographic questions and 23 items that will gather perception data. This survey design provided a numeric description of the sample population's opinions. A Pearson correlation was used to

determine if there is a significant relationship among the variables. “A Pearson – product moment correlation coefficient (r) assesses the degree quantitative variables are linearly related in a sample... the significant test for r evaluates whether there is a linear relationship between two variables in the population” (Green & Salkind, 2011, p. 256). An example would be the significance of the relationship between the number of hours studying and GPA.

A “basic” qualitative research approach was used because in applied fields of practice, such as education, administration, health, social work, counseling, business, and so on, the most common type of qualitative research is “basic” (Merriam, 2009, p. 22).

Qualitative data was gathered from open – ended responses on the survey instrument as well as from interviews (see Appendix B). The researcher purposefully selected six consenting participants to interview by signing consent to participate in research (see Appendix C, D). Since the district is very large, the researcher chose two participants from each of the high school feeder patterns. The researcher arranged a meeting time and location and notified the participants with an e-mail invitation and follow up phone call. The interview consisted of 13 questions and lasted no more than 45 minutes. The questions were crafted in such a way to allow principals to freely discuss their perceptions of Common Core State Standards and how they might affect the way they evaluate teachers.

Research Questions

The following questions guided the study:

Research Question #1: Which of the following or combination of variables are significantly related regarding principal perceptions about teacher evaluation for Common Core?

- Gender
- Professional Background
- Age
- Ethnicity
- Years as a school principal
- School Climate

Research Question #1 asks a question regarding quantitative analysis. The quantitative section of this study will provide a statistical correlation analysis of the variables that literature suggests impacts teacher evaluation. A Pearson Correlation was used to determine if there is a significant relationship among the variables.

Research Question #2: What are the perceived factors already impacting teacher evaluations of CCSS by school site principals and do they transfer?

Research Question #3: What are the perceived changes (by principals) that teacher evaluation must undergo in light of Common Core implementation?

Research questions #2 and #3 are of a qualitative nature by seeking perceptions and lived experiences. Data was be analyzed sequentially to triangulate for convergence, differences, or a combination of both.

Creswell (2009) and Merriam (2009) contend the purpose of qualitative data analysis is to make meaning of the data and both authors describe similar steps to analyze qualitative data. Creswell suggests an interactive approach layered over a linear hierarchy building from the bottom to the top (2009). Following Creswell's steps, the researcher organized the qualitative data in an Excel spread sheet and the interview transcripts in a line-numbered Microsoft Word Document. The researcher read through the data and made notes in the margins looking for segments of data relating to the research questions. These notes were organized into codes, concepts, and themes. These four major categories of data were analyzed during coding: (a) epoch (personal bracketing), (b) significant statements, (c) meaningful units, and (d) textural and structural descriptions (Creswell, 2007; Moustakas, 1994). After grouping the data, the researcher aimed to uncover the participants' views on teacher evaluation with respect to Common Core and discovered which experiences helped them develop their evaluation and supervision perceptions. The data was used to write a description of what the participants have experienced with regard to teacher evaluation as shared in the following chapters.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher is the primary person collecting and analyzing the data. The researcher is not a principal and is not able to identify with the lived experience of elementary school principals. At the beginning of the study, the researcher was the professional development coordinator to the Twin Rivers Unified School District and did not work at the school sites where data was being collected. The researcher did not

have access to any evaluative data or any personal information about the participants. Any personal information regarding principals was freely given in a response on the survey. Bias may exist because the researcher was a former employee in the district. The researcher's position supported principals that participated in the survey. By the time the survey and interviews were initiated, the researcher had left the district and had begun working in another district nearby.

Setting and Sample

Twin Rivers Unified School District Setting

The setting for this study is Twin Rivers Unified School District (TRUSD) in Northern California. The district serves a diverse population including families with a range of educational, ethnic, linguistic and socioeconomic backgrounds. TRUSD encompasses 120 square miles of the northern part of Sacramento County and serves almost 37,000 students. In 2008, four school districts in the Northern part of Sacramento County merged to form the Twin Rivers Unified School District. Three elementary and one high school district formed the new K-12 district. Data from each of the "former" districts was gathered to ensure all of the areas are represented.

The California Department of Education, Educational Demographics Unit (2012) provides demographic data about the Twin Rivers Unified School District student population.

Table 1

Enrollment by Ethnicity for 2011-2012

Total Enrollment	African American not Hispanic	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Filipino
31,637	4,796 (15.2%)	278 (0.9%)	2,700 (8.5%)	340 (1.1%)
	Hispanic or Latino	Pacific Islander	White not Hispanic	Two or More Races
	11,793 (37.3%)	464 (1.5%)	9,701 (30.7%)	936 (3.0%)

The population for this study will be all elementary and middle school principals at Twin Rivers Unified School District. The sample was comprised of the principals who will elect to complete the online survey. Approximately 50 surveys were distributed, via an e-mail link sent to principals that will ultimately direct them to the online survey. Copies of the survey, interview questions and consent forms are located in the appendices section of this study (see Appendices A, B, C, D).

Instrumentation and Materials

Quantitative and qualitative data were both gathered via a survey instrument developed by the researcher (see Appendix A). The survey instrument was based on the factors identified in literature that support and/or hinder teacher evaluation. The survey is divided into four sections. The first section gathers demographics, the second section includes statements that the literature suggests are relevant to Common Core

Standards, the third section includes statements the literature suggests to support teacher evaluation, and the final section asks principals for a written response to open-ended questions about their leadership experience.

Demographic information included: gender, education background, and professional background. The demographic section concluded with asking if the participant perceives Common Core to be a positive, negative, or neither positive nor negative experience and why, and a qualitative open ended question asking how the teacher evaluation process will change in light of Common Core.

In the next section regarding support of Common Core, participants rated statements on a Likert scale of strongly agree (10), agree, disagree, and strongly disagree (1). The final section of the survey asks the following four qualitative open-ended questions:

1. In what ways do you feel the teacher evaluation process will change with respect to Common Core State Standards?
2. What is your role in supporting teachers through evaluation of the instructional techniques used to reach Common Core State Standards?
3. Please identify items of the TRUSD Teacher Evaluation holding the strongest influence on improving Common Core State Standards delivery through teacher performance in the classroom.
4. Please identify the items of the TRUSD Teacher Evaluation that have the least influence on improving Common Core State Standards teacher performance in the classroom.

The final question asks if they are willing to participate in an interview based on this topic (see Appendix C).

Structure of Qualitative Analysis: Grounded Theory Method

The grounded theory method of data analysis, as discussed by Merriam (2009) in *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, allows the use of categories, properties (concepts), and hypothesis (themes) to form links between and among the categories and properties of the data (p. 199). Data for each research question was analyzed and coded in regard to recurring themes. The researcher will begin this process by identifying segments in the data set responsive to each research question. Words, phrases, and concepts that recur throughout the data were be highlighted and color-coded into classification schemes or thematic threads. The data was divided into general themes related to the literature and qualitative framework, a method of research that allows for investigation of phenomena within real-life, natural contexts (Merriam, 2009). Sub-themes were classified under each of the main themes that might be found throughout the relevant text of the six interview transcriptions. Special attention was given to ideas that are repeated by multiple participants. This allowed for large amounts of data in the form of text to be reduced into recurrent patterns and themes (Creswell, 2009).

Protection of Participants

The study design and procedures, survey instrument, interview questions and consent forms were approved by the dissertation chair, participating school, and the University Human Subjects Committee before any data was collected. The researcher

does not have access to the participants human resource file and the survey was delivered by an online survey. The interviews were set up based on the data collected by the survey and an invitation to participate was sent via e-mail. In order to protect participant anonymity, the online survey hid the IP addresses (the identity of the computer used to complete the survey) of all participants. The participants who were interviewed were given pseudonyms. All forms and data will be destroyed six months after the submission of this study to the university. All participation is completely voluntary and participants can withdraw at any time, with no consequences.

Chapter 4

ANALYSIS OF DATA

This study used a mixed-methods design with both quantitative and qualitative research methods. The quantitative research compared whether there is a significant relationship between variables such as principal gender, professional background, leadership style, or school culture and the impact on how a principal might evaluate teachers who are implementing Common Core State Standards. The qualitative research focused uncovering the participants' views on teacher evaluation with respect to Common Core and discovering which experiences help them develop their evaluation and supervision perceptions. The quantitative research addressed Question 1:

Research Question #1: Which of the following or combination of variables are significantly related regarding principal perceptions about teacher evaluation for Common Core?

- Gender
- Professional Background
- School Culture
- Ethnicity
- Age
- Years as a school principal

Qualitative data were collected through a series of 6 interviews of K-12 evaluating principals in the Twin Rivers Unified School District. The interview

highlights strategies that principals use in the evaluations of teachers as well as perceived factors of Common Core State Standards and how they affect teacher evaluation processes. The qualitative research addressed research questions #2 and #3:

Research Question #2: What are the perceived factors already impacting teacher evaluations of CCSS by school site principals and do they transfer?

Research Question #3: What are the perceived changes (by principals) that teacher evaluation must undergo in light of Common Core implementation?

Demographic Data

The research took place in Twin Rivers Unified School District (TRUSD), which is located in Northern Sacramento. The district serves a diverse population including families with a range of educational, ethnic, linguistic and socioeconomic backgrounds. TRUSD encompasses 120 square miles of the northern part of Sacramento County and serves almost 37,000 students. In 2008, four school districts in the Northern part of Sacramento County merged to form the Twin Rivers Unified School District. Three elementary and one high school district formed the new K-12 district. Data from each of the “former” districts was gathered to ensure all of the areas are represented.

Report of Quantitative Data

Quantitative Data Addressing Research Question 1

Quantitative data were used to consider Question 1 through the use of survey data. The K-8 elementary principals in a northern California district were given a voluntary Likert-scale survey by e-mail during the months of October and November

2013 using SurveyMonkey, a company that enables users to create their own Web-based surveys. Questions 2-8 represented background and demographic data and represent the variables used in the research. Questions 9-25 gathered information on principal perceptions. Questions 26-29 were open-ended questions that allowed participants to expand on ideas regarding principal perceptions of Common Core and the impact on teacher evaluation. At the time of this survey there were 50 K-8 principals with a variation of leadership experience. Out of the 50 principals, 31 participants agreed to take the survey. Once the participants proceeded into the survey, they were permitted to skip any questions they did not feel comfortable answering, thereby creating a range of participants who chose to answer each question. The number of participants answering questions ranged from 27-31, depending on the question asked.

Findings, Question 1

Survey questions 1-5 and 27. The data from questions 1-5 and 27 are represented statistically using the IBM Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) program. These questions also help answer research question # 1.

Research Question #1: Which of the following or combination of variables are significantly related regarding principal perceptions about teacher evaluation for Common Core?

- Gender
- Professional Background
- School Climate

- Ethnicity
- Age
- Years as a Principal

The following table shows a correlation matrix where the symbol r is the Pearson correlation coefficient ranging from -1 to +1. The symbol p is the probability of an observed result happening by chance under the null hypothesis. Significance of $p < .05$ states there is a 95% Confidence Interval (CI). Effect size (Cohen) describes the strength of the correlation: .1 = low; .3 = medium; and .5 = high. A positive correlation indicates that as one variable increases the other variable increases as well. A negative correlation shows that as one variable increases the other variable decreases.

Table 2

Correlation Between Variables

Variable Correlations

		Gender	Professional Background	School Culture	Ethnicity	Age	Years
Gender	Pearson Correlation	1	.054	-.144	-.421*	.182	-.126
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.775	.440	.018	.326	.508
	N	31	31	31	31	31	30
Professional Background	Pearson Correlation	.054	1	-.021	-.331	-.283	.021
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.775		.912	.069	.124	.911
	N	31	31	31	31	31	30
School Culture	Pearson Correlation	-.144	-.021	1	-.118	.128	.177
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.440	.912		.527	.492	.348
	N	31	31	31	31	31	30
Ethnicity	Pearson Correlation	-.421*	-.331	-.118	1	.132	.313
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.018	.069	.527		.479	.092
	N	31	31	31	31	31	30
Age	Pearson Correlation	.182	-.283	.128	.132	1	-.051
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.326	.124	.492	.479		.787
	N	31	31	31	31	31	30
Years	Pearson Correlation	-.126	.021	.177	.313	-.051	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.508	.911	.348	.092	.787	
	N	30	30	30	30	30	30

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Question 1 was designed to explore principal perceptions of teacher evaluation with respect to Common Core implementation and whether there was a significant relationship between variables such as principal gender, professional background, school culture, ethnicity, age and the number of years as a school principal and the impact on how a principal might evaluate teachers who are implementing Common Core State Standards.

To test this question, a Pearson correlation test on the variables of gender, professional background, school culture, ethnicity, age, and years as a principal was conducted. For these data, there was a significant negative correlation between ethnicity and age, $r = -.42$, $p = .018$, meaning that there was a weak correlation between ethnicity and age. The two variables cannot be considered in a correlation and the data is therefore insignificant in the study.

Descriptive Statistics

Survey questions 1-8. The questions 1-8 on the survey aimed at gathering demographic data about principals. Many of these questions gathered information about the variables contained in research question 1.

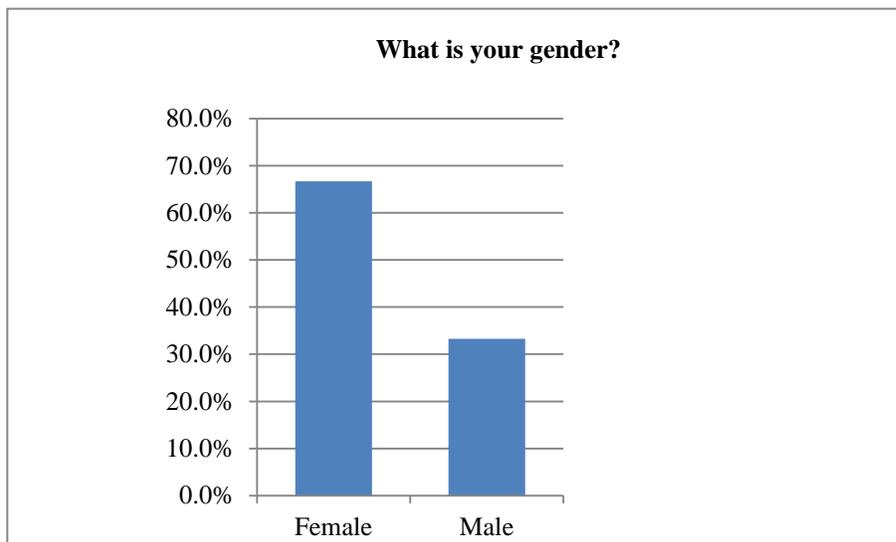


Figure 1. Question #1: What is your gender?

Out of 30 participants who responded to question #2, 67% identified themselves as female and 33% identified as male. One participant skipped this question. Significantly more (34%) women completed this survey than men.

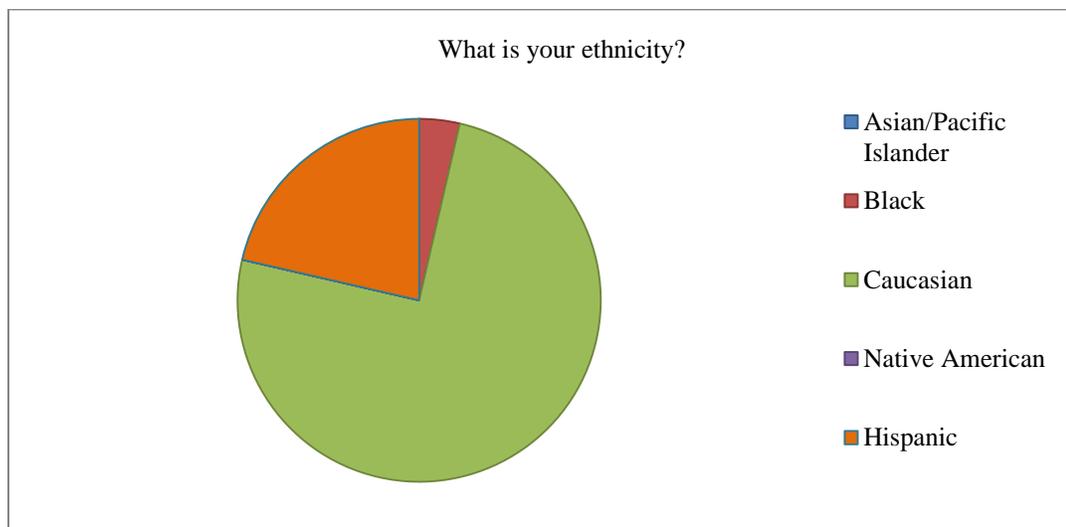


Figure 2. Question #2: What is your ethnicity?

Participants in this study identified themselves with respect to ethnicity in a variety of ways. Out of the 31 survey responses, 75% identified themselves as Caucasian, 21.4% as Hispanic, 3.6% as African American, 0% as Pacific Islander, and 0% as Asian. There were 2 participants who did not respond to this question.

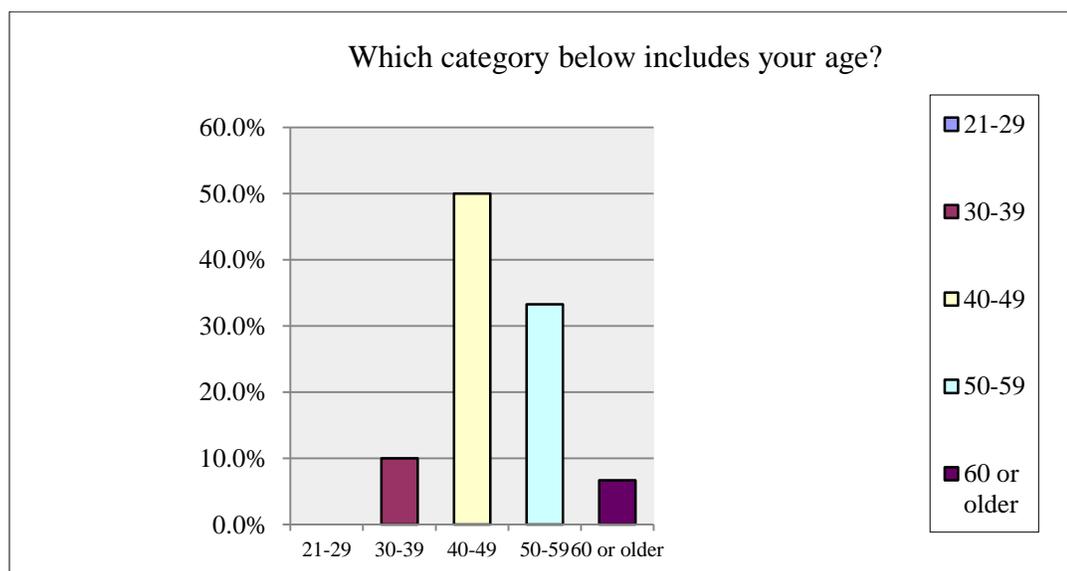


Figure 3. Question #3: What category below includes your age?

Fifty percent of survey respondents report their age to be within the 40-49 years range. In addition, 33.3% of survey respondents reported to be within the age range of 50-59 years. 10% of respondents are in the 30-39 year range followed by 6.7% of respondents reporting to be within the age range of 60 or older. There were no (0%) survey respondents who identified as being within the 21-29 years age range and 1 respondent chose to skip the question.

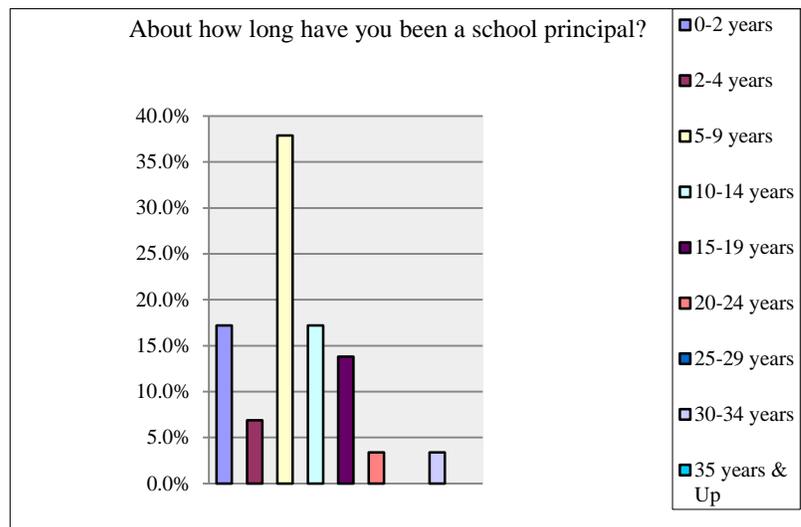


Figure 4. Question #4: About how long have you been a school principal?

About thirty-eight (37.9%) percent of survey respondents have been a school principal for 5-9 years. The same percentage (17.2%) of principals reported to have been a principal for 0-2 years and 10-14 years. Fourteen percent of the survey respondents say they have acted as a school principal for 15-19 years and 6.9% reported career length to be within the 2-4 years range. Finally, the same percentage (3.4%) reported career lengths of 20-24 years and 30-34 years. Two of the survey respondents skipped the question.

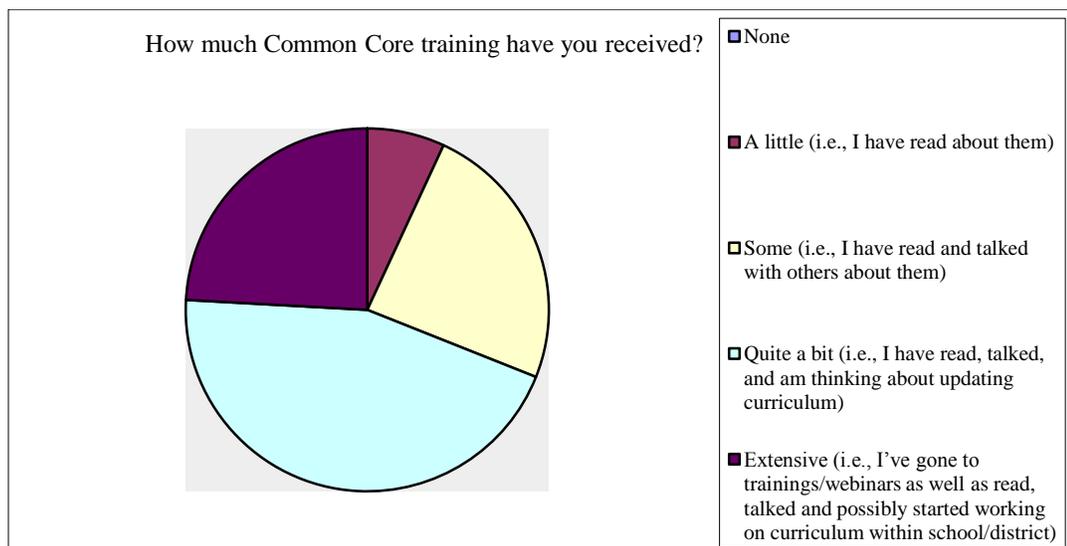


Figure 5. Question #5: How much Common Core training have you received?

Forty-five (44.8%) percent of principals that responded to the survey reported that they have had quite a bit of Common Core State Standard training that included reading about the standards, talking about the standards, and having thoughts about updating curriculum in order to accommodate the new standards. Twenty-four percent of principals have had some training that included only reading and talking about the standards. The same percentage (24.1%) report having an extensive background with Common Core that includes attending trainings and webinars as well as reading the standards, talking about them with others and also working on updating curriculum at their school or in their district. A small percentage (6.9%) of respondents say that they have had little experience with Common Core and 0% of respondents reported having no experience or knowledge of the Common Core.

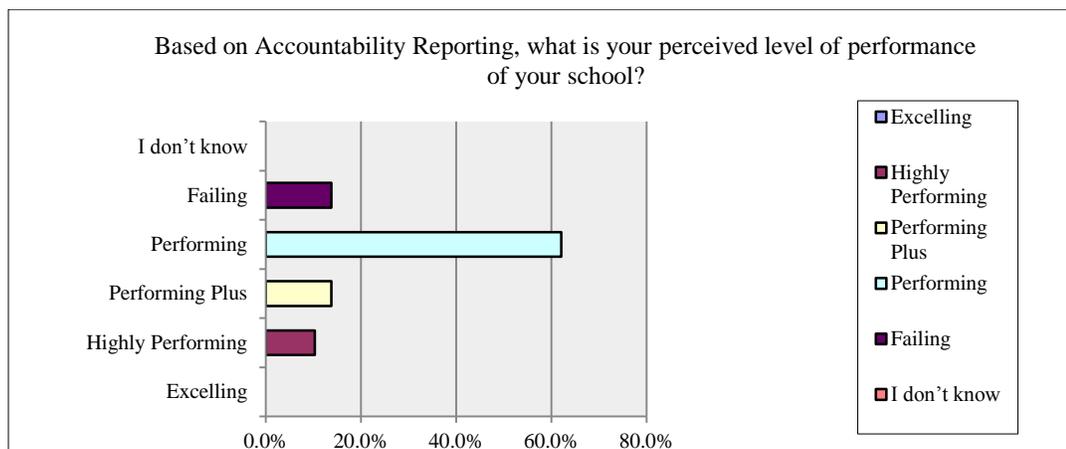


Figure 6. Question #6: Based on Accountability Reporting, what is your perceived level of performance of your school?

Most principals (62.1%) perceived their school to be regarded as “Performing” based on accountability reporting. Unfortunately, 13.8% of surveyed principals perceive their school as “Failing” based on accountability reporting. The same percentage (13.8%) of principals perceive their school to be “Performing Plus”. Ten percent of the surveyed principals perceive that their school is actually “Highly Performing” and there were no (0%) reports of principals leading “High Performing” and 0% of principals not knowing where their schools stood with respect to accountability reporting.

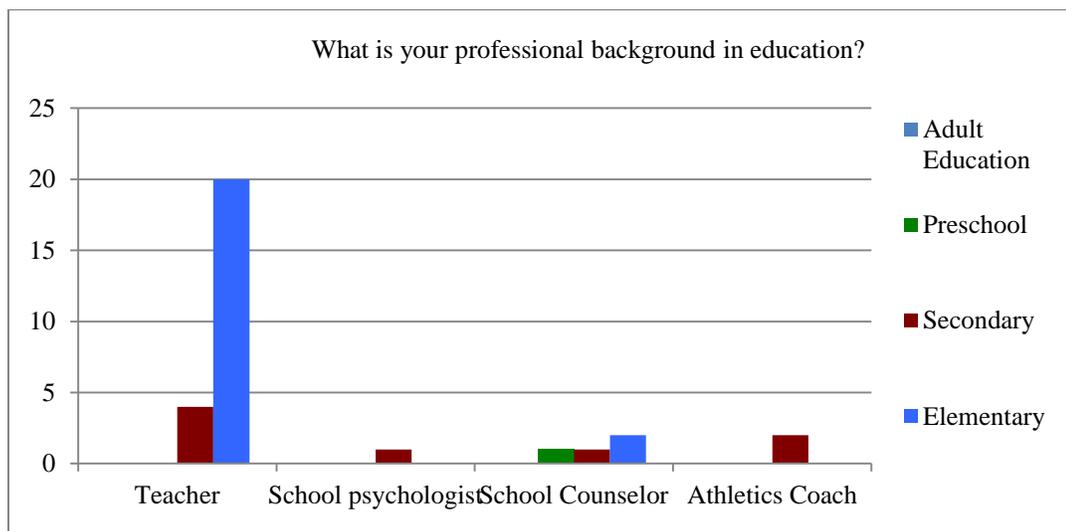


Figure 7. Question #7: What is your professional background in education?

Most principals (88.8%) surveyed said that their professional background with respect to education was in the teaching field. Of these teacher-principals, 83% of them reported being elementary teachers and 17% reported being secondary teachers. Four percent of the respondents said that they had a secondary school psychologist background and 7.4% of the principals said they had a secondary athletic coach background. There were a variety of school counselor backgrounds reported by the principals. The total percentage of school counselors was 14.81%. Within the school counselor percentage includes 50% reporting having a background in elementary school counseling, 25% in preschool counseling, and 25% in secondary school counseling. There were 2 principals who skipped the question.

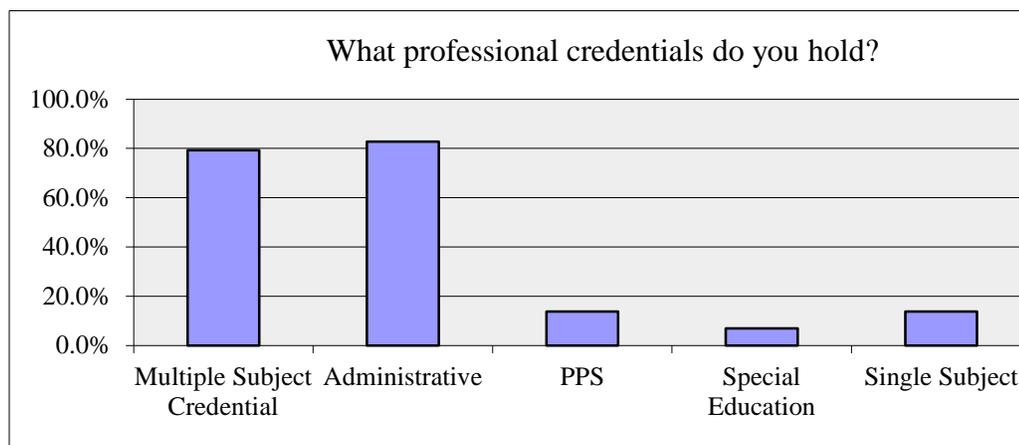


Figure 8. Question #8: What professional credentials do you hold?

Eighty-three percent of school principals indicated that they had an administrative credential, which is interesting because it is necessary to hold this credential in order to be a school administrator in California. According to the data, 79.3% of survey participants indicated that they hold a multiple subjects credential. The same percentage (13.8%) of principals indicated that they hold either a Pupil Personnel Services (counseling) or a Single Subject credential. The remaining 6.9% of principals indicated that they held a special education credential. There were two participants who skipped this question.

Survey questions 9-26. Survey questions 9-25 were aimed at gathering information about principal perceptions on various topics surrounding teacher evaluation and Common Core State Standards. The researcher developed the questions as she uncovered themes in the related literature.

Table 3

Question 9: The evaluation process helps teachers acquire the knowledge and skills to gather, analyze, and apply information and ideas.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
6.90%	24.14%	13.79%	51.72%	3.45%	
2	7	4	15	1	29

Thirty-one percent of principals surveyed disagreed with the above statement while 55.17% were in agreement. Fourteen percent indicated a neutral response and there were 2 respondents that skipped the question. The majority (52%) of principals perceive that teacher evaluation can help teachers acquire the knowledge and skills to gather, analyze, and apply information and ideas.

Table 4

Question 10: The evaluation process helps teachers to acquire the knowledge and skills to communicate effectively within and beyond the classroom.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
6.90%	24.14%	24.14%	44.82%	0%	
2	7	7	13	0	29

A significant percentage (44.82%) of principals agreed that the evaluation process can assist teachers in communication within and beyond the classroom. Those who disagreed (31.04%) were less in number but not insignificant. Twenty-four percent of principals remained neutral on the statement and 2 skipped the question.

Table 5.

Question 11: The evaluation process helps teachers to acquire the knowledge and skills to recognize and solve problems.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
6.90%	17.24%	20.69%	51.72%	3.45%	
2	5	6	15	1	29

A majority (51.72%) of respondents indicate that they are in agreement with the above statement; that evaluation can help teachers recognize and solve problems. Twenty-four percent of principals disagree with that belief, 20.69% were neutral, and 2 skipped the question.

Table 6

Question 12: The evaluation process helps teachers to acquire the knowledge and skills to make decisions and act as responsible members of society.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
20.69%	17.24%	24.14%	31.03%	6.90%	
6	5	7	9	2	29

More principals (37.93%) disagreed with the notion that the evaluation process can assist them in making decisions and acting as responsible members of society while the same percentage (37.93%) agreed. Twenty-four percent of respondents indicated a neutral response. There were two principals who skipped the question.

Table 7

Question 13: The evaluation process helps teachers align the assessment with the goals, objectives, and instructional strategies of the Common Core State Standards.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
13.8%	10.35%	20.69%	51.73%	3.45%	
4	3	6	15	1	29

Fifty-five (55.18%) percent of respondents indicate that they agree that evaluation can help teachers align assessment with Common Core State Standards. A fraction (24.15%) of principals disagree with this belief while 20.69% remained neutral. There were 2 participants that skipped the question.

Table 8

Question 14: The evaluation process helps teachers demonstrate appropriate preparation for instruction of Common Core State Standards.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
10.35%	13.79%	24.14%	51.72%	0%	
3	4	7	15	0	29

Fifty-two (51.72%) percent of respondents indicate an agreement with the above statement. More principals (51.72%) believe that the evaluation can help teachers to prepare for instruction of the Common Core State Standards. Only 24.14% of respondents disagreed with the same statement while the same percentage remained neutral. Two survey participants skipped the question.

Table 9

Question 15: The evaluation process helps teachers choose and implement appropriate methodology and varied instructional strategies that address Common Core State Standards.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
10.35%	16.94%	20.69%	51.73%	0%	
3	5	6	15	0	29

Fifty-two (51.73%) percent of respondents indicate that they agree with the evaluation process helping teachers choose and implement appropriate methodology and varied instructional strategies that address CCSS. Twenty-seven percent of respondents disagreed while 20.69% remained neutral. Two participants skipped this question.

Table 10

Question 16: The evaluation process helps teachers create a positive learning environment in Common Core implementation.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
10.05%	23.82%	17.24%	51.72%	6.90%	
3	4	5	15	2	29

Fifty-nine (58.62%) percent of survey respondents agreed that the evaluation process helps teachers create a positive learning environment while implementing CCSS. While 17.24% remained neutral, 33.87% disagreed that the evaluation process can assist teachers in creating a positive learning environment. There were 2 respondents who skipped the question.

Table 11

Question 17: The evaluation process helps teachers choose and implement appropriate methodology and varied instructional strategies that address Common Core State Standards.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
10.35%	17.24%	20.69%	51.73%	0%	
3	5	6	15	0	29

Fifty-two (52%) percent of survey respondents indicate agreement with the statement, “The evaluation process helps teachers choose and implement appropriate methodology and varied instructional strategies that address Common Core State Standards”. Only 27.59% disagree with this statement while 20.69% remained neutral. Two survey respondents did not answer question 17.

Table 12

Question 18: The evaluation process helps teachers create a positive learning environment in Common Core implementation.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
10.35%	13.79%	17.24%	51.72%	6.90%	
3	4	5	15	2	29

Fifty-nine (58.62%) percent of survey respondents agree that the evaluation process can help teachers create positive learning environments in CCSS implementation. Only 24.14% disagree with this statement while 17.24 remain neutral. Two survey participants did not answer this question.

Table 13

Question 19: The evaluation process helps teachers effectively manage student behaviors in a classroom that is implementing Common Core State Standards.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
3.45%	34.49%	20.69%	34.49%	6.90%	
1	10	6	10	2	29

It seems from survey indications that there are an equal amount of principals who both agree and disagree with the above statement. 41.39% of survey respondents indicate that they agree with the assertion that the evaluation process helps teachers

effectively manage student behaviors in a classroom that has implemented CCSS. A similar percentage (37.94%) disagree with the same assertion while 20.69% remained neutral and 2 participants chose not to answer the question.

Table 14

Question 20: The evaluation process helps teachers engage in appropriate interpersonal relationships with students, parents, community, and staff.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
3.45%	31.04%	24.14%	34.48%	6.90%	
1	9	7	10	2	29

Forty-one (41.38%) percent of school principals surveyed agreed that evaluation can help teachers engage in appropriate interpersonal relationships with stakeholders. Thirty-five percent of respondents indicate a disagreement with the perception while 24.14% remained neutral. Two respondents did not answer the question.

Table 15

Question 21: The evaluation process helps teachers engage in professional development activities consistent with the goals and objectives of the building, district, and state Common Core State Standards implementation.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
6.90%	20.69%	6.90%	58.62%	6.90%	
2	6	2	17	2	29

Sixty-six (65.52%) percent of survey respondents indicate that they agree with the statement, “The evaluation process helps teachers engage in professional development activities consistent with the goals and objectives of the building, district, and state Common Core State Standards implementation”. Conversely, only 27.59% of those surveyed disagreed with that statement. Only 6.90% remained neutral while 2 declined to answer the question.

Table 16

Question 22: The evaluation process helps teachers engage in professional development for Common Core State Standards.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
3.45%	31.03%	13.79%	44.83%	6.90%	
1	9	4	13	2	29

Fifty-two (51.73%) percent of respondents agree with the assertion that the evaluation process helps teachers engage in professional development of CCSS. Only 34.48% of those principals disagreed with that statement while 13.79% remained neutral. There were 2 participants who did not answer this question.

Table 17

Question 23: The evaluation process helps teachers assist in maintaining a safe and orderly environment that supports Common Core State Standards.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
17.24%	17.24%	17.24%	44.83%	3.45%	
5	5	5	13	1	29

Forty-eight (48%) percent of principals surveyed agree with the statement, “The evaluation process helps teachers assist in maintaining a safe and orderly environment that supports Common Core State Standards”. Thirty-four percent of principals surveyed indicated a disagreement with the statement while 17.24% remained neutral. Twenty-nine out of 31 respondents answered the question.

Table 18

Question 24: The evaluation process helps teachers collaborate in the development and/or implementation of the district's vision, mission, and goals of Common Core State Standards.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
10.35%	31.04%	20.69%	34.48%	3.45%	
3	9	6	10	1	29

An equal percentage of principals agreed (37.93%) than disagreed (41.39%) about the statement, “The evaluation process helps teachers collaborate in the development and/or implementation of the district’s vision, mission, and goals of Common Core State Standards”. 20.69 of respondents remained neutral and 2 respondents declined to answer the question.

Table 19

Question 25: The evaluation process in the area of mentoring provides teachers the opportunity for dialogue that deepens understanding of instructional strategies needed for improvement in Common Core.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
3.45%	13.79%	17.24%	44.83%	20.68%	
1	4	5	13	6	29

Sixty-five (65.51%) percent of survey respondents agree that the evaluation process provides teachers with opportunities for dialog that deepens understanding of instructional strategies that are needed to Common Core improvement. Few (17.24%) respondents indicate a disagreement of that statement while the same percentage (17.24%) remained neutral. There were 2 participants who did not answer this question.

Table 20

Question 26: The leadership style of a principal affects the way he/she evaluates teachers.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
0%	3.45%	3.45%	48.27%	44.82%	
0	1	1	14	13	29

Overwhelmingly (89.09%), participants agree that principal leadership style effects the evaluation of teachers. Only 3.45% were neutral and an insignificant percentage (3.45%) disagreed with the assertion. There were 2 survey participants that chose not to answer the survey question.

Comments from the Survey Regarding Open-Ended Questions 26-29

Question # 26: Please identify the items of the TRUSD Teacher Evaluation Process that have the strongest influence on improving Common Core State Standards teacher performance in the classroom. Principals who responded to the

open-ended section of the survey indicated the strongest influence of the current evaluation system to be the California Standards for the Teaching Profession, specifically for improving CCSS performance in the classroom. Principals overwhelmingly supported this notion. One principal stated that, “All six of the Teaching Standards influence improving common Core State Standards teacher performance in the classroom.” Another principal echoed that sentiment by stating, “I feel that the standards, specifically the one that focuses on developing as an Educator is key to the success of CCSS. Being reflective and working with all those around them will ultimately lead to success.”

Principals agree that the current model of teacher evaluation is aligned to the CSTP and that certain criteria are aligned to the demonstration of better instruction with respect to the Common Core State Standards.

Question #27: Please identify the items of the TRUSD Teacher Evaluation Process that have the least influence on improving Common Core State Standards teacher performance in the classroom. Principals report that they believe the CSTP to have much influence on teacher evaluation as it pertains to Common Core but that it is with the evaluators and supervisors themselves where a lack of influence can occur. Most principals believe that the breach of standardization occurs within the differing evaluative practices of principals themselves and not with the evaluation model. One principal asserts that, “I don't know that any part is least influential, it is how the process is followed by the evaluator that will have more or less influence on a teacher's performance.”

Principals indicate that there is a need for more coaching and reflection in tandem with the CSTP Criteria. As one principal asserts, “The fact that it is an evaluation of teacher performance as apposed to teacher supervision. Since teacher evaluation is a one shot deal as apposed to an ongoing coaching model makes it less likely to have a strong influence on improving CCSS in the classroom.” Many assert that the current model is not effective because the reflective piece is missing and that the approach is punitive, not growth-oriented.

Question #28: In what ways do you feel the teacher evaluation process will change with respect to Common Core? Principals seemed unsure how to answer this question. Many responded that they were, “unsure” or “did not know the answer”. Of the respondents that answered, all of them indicated a need for evaluation to change. Some of the changes that principals said were vital to CCSS evaluation were more attention to planning. Additionally, principals believe that there should be more reflection and coaching embedded in the evaluation process. Principals perceive the need for change but are unsure about how that will occur. Some principals identified the need for a more reflective approach, such as a peer evaluation model.

Question #29: Describe your role in supporting teachers as you evaluate them in the implementation of common core. Principals indicated that they perceive their role in different ways. Some principals see themselves as coaches, mentors, instructional leaders and cheerleaders while others see themselves evaluators, facilities managers, and administrators. One principal stated, “I support with classroom walk-throughs, conversations, and coaching.” Another leader stated, “My role is to facilitate

the professional development and provide as many opportunities as possible for teachers to participate in professional development that will enhance their knowledge and implementation of Common Core lessons”.

Overwhelmingly, principals perceive themselves as first and foremost instructional leaders. They feel the need to learn and keep current on best practices of Common Core instructional strategies. In addition, participants perceive themselves as coaches and mentors. They feel that they play a role in supporting CCS by providing for immediate, valuable feedback on classroom walkthroughs, reflective conversations, and high-quality professional development. Some principals see their roles in a more transactional way; indicating that an important role they play is one of supervisor and administrator.

Report of Qualitative Data

Qualitative Data Addressing Research Questions 2 and 3

Qualitative methodology guided the data collection and analysis of Questions 2 and 3: What are the perceived factors already impacting teacher evaluations of CCSS by school site principals and do they transfer and what are the perceived changes (by principals) that teacher evaluation must undergo in light of Common Core implementation? Qualitative data included interview transcriptions and interviewer notes from one 30-minute interview of a K-12 evaluating principal in the Twin Rivers Unified School District.

Introducing the Principals and the Key Relationships

Table 21

Participant Demographics

Participants	School Configuration	Leadership experience	Leads a PI school
1	K-6	12 years	Yes
2	K-8	10 years	Yes
3	K-8	12 years	District is PI
4	PK-8	5 years	No
5	K-8	7 years	Yes
6	K-8	15 years	Yes

Principal population. Twin Rivers Unified School District has 50 principals that lead its K-12 schools. The numerically significant subgroup principal populations include white, Latino, and African American.

Key relationships. The key people, groups, and organizations involved with the principals are governing board members, leadership cabinet member, their evaluators, teachers, student families, and community members. Each relationship is explained in this section.

Twin Rivers Unified School District Governing Board. The Twin Rivers Unified School District is governed by an elected Board of Trustees that represents seven geographic areas, based on the elected member's address of

residence. The Board of Trustees is elected by the community to provide leadership and citizen oversight of the district. The Board shall ensure that the district is responsive to the values, beliefs, and priorities of the community. The Governing Board works with the Superintendent to fulfill its major responsibilities, which include:

- Setting the direction for the district through a process that involves the community, parents/guardians, students, and staff and is focused on student learning and achievement
- Establishing an effective and efficient organizational structure for the district
- Providing support to the Superintendent and staff as they carry out the Board's direction
- Ensuring accountability to the public for the performance of the district's schools
- Providing community leadership and advocacy on behalf of students, the district's educational program, and public education in order to build support within the local community and at the state and national levels

District Leadership/Superintendent' Cabinet Members. The Superintendent's Cabinet is comprised of personnel who hold the title of "Associate Superintendent" There are the following positions currently on the Superintendent's Cabinet: Associate Superintendent of Educational Services, Associate Superintendent of Human

Resources, Associate Superintendent of Business Services, and the Chief of Police. There are other director positions that also sit on the Superintendent's Cabinet. The Cabinet members report to the Superintendent directly.

Executive Directors, Directors, Coordinators, Program Specialists, and other staff represent the District Leadership team. There is also representation from classified groups that include employees that do not work under a teaching credential and certificated groups whose work is "certified" by a special credential as well. Many of the Twin Rivers K-12 principals are involved in the leadership team which leads many initiatives, makes key decisions on curriculum and instruction, and gives input to the Cabinet, Superintendent, and the Governing Board.

Twin Rivers United Educators (TRUE). Twin Rivers United Educators (TRUE) supports about 1400 Educators. It is a chartered chapter of the California Teachers Association (CTA) and a local affiliate of the National Education Association (NEA). While membership is not mandatory, all of the Twin Rivers certificated staff are represented by TRUE. Principals evaluate, supervise, and coach teachers at their school site. They also work very closely with the Union with respect to contract negotiations, grievances, salary schedules, and employment/staffing changes.

There has been past tension between TRUE and district leadership, including principals. Many Union representatives have been very vocal about principals in the district and their ability to be leaders. It should be noted that a number of participants

in this research study had negative relationships with TRUE during the course of research.

Twin Rivers students and families. School site principals have relationships with the students who attend their school and their families. Principals are often seen visiting classrooms, walking the campus, observing children on the playground, and supervising children while they eat in the cafeteria.

The principals also lead the School Site Council (SSC), which is an advisory council required by the California Department of Education and the California Educational Code. The principal convenes the SSC once per month and discusses school goals, funding, staffing, and programs. These meetings are open to the public but only the advisory has voting power. In addition to the SSC, the principals also conduct family engagement activities. These activities are focused on increasing the number of family member that are involved in their student's education. Family engagement includes activities such as "Back to School Night", parent conferences, open house, and other activities aimed at increased family participation in school activities.

Northern Sacramento Community. School site principals must have a strong relationship with the surrounding community. Many principals make these relationships and use them in order to improve the school culture. Many principals spend countless hours meeting with civic and political leaders in order to secure extra funding or additional programs for the school. These groups support the principal with leadership of a school site, including the evaluation of the teachers.

Interview Data

The qualitative section included six 35-45 minute, one-on-one interviews by the researcher. Once the interviews had been completed the researcher used multiple procedures in order to organize, code, and analyze the data. (See Chapter 3 for a detailed description of the data analysis procedures.) During these procedures many commonalities surfaced.

One of these commonalities was the notion that principals believe that teacher evaluation must change in order to accommodate Common Core State Standards. Another commonality was that principals perceive their roles in evaluation as coaches and mentors. The principals also believed that district implemented a “one- shot” approach to evaluation. They felt that an approach of guidance and support over a long period of time was the key ingredient to a teacher’s instructional success with Common Core. Lastly, the principals interviewed overwhelmingly felt that they wanted nothing more than to be a transformational leader with respect to teacher evaluation but that they had no choice but to default to a more transactional leadership style because of the demands and expectations of their jobs.

As a result of these commonalities, 6 concrete themes emerged from the interviews. In an attempt to eliminate any research bias, the label for each theme was developed using specific wording from the interviewees. The themes are: Time, Evaluation is punitive, Evaluation lacks meaning, Evaluation should be growth oriented, and Multiple leadership styles. These themes provided the basis for answering research questions 2 and 3. There were also additional ideas that emerged

from the themes that connected to the research questions but did not directly answer them. These ideas were also labeled by using the interviewees' wording. This section discusses the findings for research questions 2 and 3 as well as the additional ideas that emerge.

Interview Participants

To understand more about the individual principal perceptions about the impact of Common Core on teacher evaluation practices, interviews were conducted with 6 K-6 school site principals. Themes were discovered while meeting with the interview participants.

Interview participant #1. "Jewell" is an African American Female who did not disclose her age to the researcher. She is currently the principal of a Title I K-6 school located in Del Paso Heights, California. She has been acting as a principal for over 10 years. She wanted to become a principal because she observed many injustices as she navigated the Special Education system with her own child. She decided early on in her career that she wanted to be an advocate for children, especially children who may not have equal access to the educational system. Jewell has a Master's degree in Cross-Cultural Education and a California administrative credential.

Jewell began her teaching career as a special education teacher working with children that had special needs. She also has experience teaching gifted and talented children and English Language Learners (ELL).

Jewell did not intend on becoming a site principal. After a few years of teaching, she was recruited into service on her school's site leadership team. This

launched her into many different opportunities to lead. Jewell perceives that she became a “principal-by-default”. She reported that she became a teacher on special assignment, which took her out of the classroom and into the district office and then held a position as English Language Learner coordinator. During her tenure at the district office, a principal, who was ill, left in the middle of the year. She was named interim principal and took over for the ailing principal mid-year and has been in school site leadership ever since.

Interview participant #2. Chela is a Latino female who did not disclose her age to the researcher. She is currently the principal of a Title I 5th-8th grade school located in Rio Linda, California. She has been acting as a principal in several districts for over 10 years. She wanted to become a principal because she thought it would be great experience and welcomed the challenge to lead a school site.

Chela earned her teaching credential and began teaching elementary and intermediate grade levels. She taught in private school for many years and wanted to attempt teaching in public school. She applied to teach in both San Juan and Sacramento City but decided that she was a better fit in San Juan. She wanted to diversify her resume and as a result began volunteering for leadership opportunities.

Chela began her administrative career as an elementary vice principal and fought against the stereo-typing of students and worked hard to assure that all children had equal access to a quality education. After obtaining experience as a vice principal of two different high schools, Chela became the principal a middle school.

Interview participant #3. Sandra is a 47 year old Caucasian female. She is currently the principal on special assignment with the Twin Rivers Unified School District. Subsequent to her current position, Sandra was a principal of a K-5 Title 1 school located in North Sacramento. She has been acting as a principal for over eleven years. She wanted to become a principal because she wanted to affect change in the education system and felt that her leadership could do just that. She decided as a senior in high school that she wanted to become a principal someday and worked diligently towards that goal. She has a California teaching credential, a master's degree, and a California administrative credential.

Sandra began her teaching career as a middle school teacher. She enjoyed her teaching years but felt after 11 years that it was time to move into an administrative position. She was a middle school vice principal and then an elementary school principal.

Interview participant #4. Katrina is a 38-year-old African American female. She is currently the principal of a Title I Pre-K and Kindergarten school located in Del Paso Heights, California. She has been acting as a principal for over 5 years.

Katrina did not have a traditional path into school leadership. She was a social worker and valued her work with young children. She earned a Master's in counseling and earned her Doctorate in Education in 2013. She began working with children as a case worker for Child Protective Services. It was because of her love of young children, specifically, pre-school children that she decided to work for the public school system. She has no formal classroom or instructional experience. Katrina held

the position of Early Childhood Coordinator, which ultimately led her into her current position. She was appointed as an interim principal and became permanent after a year.

Interview participant #5. Thomas” is a 45-year-old Caucasian male. He is currently the principal of a Title I Pre-K – 2nd Grade school located in North Sacramento, California. He has been acting as a principal for over 5 years. Thomas had aspirations of earning his Master’s degree, but never had any real desire to become a school administrator. He feels that it was during a trying time in his life, he made the decision to focus on his career that led him to the right opportunities.

Thomas was recruited by the district office before completion of his administrative credential and was offered many opportunities to expand his leadership repertoire. He became a vice principal and was mentored by strong leadership in his district, which prepared him for his next position as school site principal.

Interview participant #6. Marshall Charmaine is a 61-year-old Caucasian female. She is currently the principal of a Title I Pre-K – 6th grade school located in North Sacramento, California. She has been acting as a principal for over 10 years.

Marshall Charmaine did not set out to become a teacher. Armed with a business degree, she soon found out that the economy had affected her ability to get a job. She began teaching and for three years found great pleasure in her work. She spent 2 years as curriculum and instruction coordinator, which led her into being appointed as an interim principal. She then became the permanent principal of an elementary school.

Qualitative Analysis: Grounded Theory Method

Merriam's work, as discussed in Chapter 3, allowed the use of incidents (or codes), categories, properties (concepts), and hypotheses (themes) to form links between and among the categories and properties of data. The researcher examined interview notes and transcripts until categories formed and emerged. The researcher then looked for the properties of the categories. Comparisons were made between levels of conceptualization until theories were formed. The first step of this process was analyzing the frequency of notable incidents to find categories, because the more frequently an incident is noted, the stronger the code.

All data was analyzed using the methodical method discussed below. In the spirit of qualitative research, the participants' data was analyzed first and then the researcher's interview notes. Participants were analyzed one by one starting with the first person interviewed and ending with the last person interviewed. For the purposes of this research study, themes and sub-themes are used. As the researcher analyzed the data, thoughts and beliefs emerged from the data, these are referred to as sub-themes. As the data analysis process continued, the author realized that these individual sub-themes could be grouped together into larger categories therefore called themes. Both open and closed coding was used. During the open coding process, the researcher read, and re-read data to find emerging themes that came from the participant's perspective. During the closed coding process, those themes that emerged were categorized and then grouped according to which research question they addressed best. Each participant was analyzed using the following steps below:

- 1st- Interview transcripts were open coded whereby emerging themes were highlighted.
- 2nd-Observational field notes were open coded.
- 3rd - Interview and observation themes were noted and major themes were recorded on a data grid.
- 4th- Major themes were closed coded and grouped according to the three research questions of the project.
- 5th- After major themes from each participant were close coded, then participants' data as a group were analyzed for overall themes.
- 6th - After themes for the participants as a whole were analyzed, the researcher followed the same process as steps one through five and analyzed her personal journal.
- 7th-Major themes from the participants were placed onto 3X5 index cards and categorized into overall categories.
- 8th - The categories were analyzed and placed according to which research question they addressed.

The statements and themes found throughout the open coding process became the basis for discussing two of the research questions of this study:

Research Question #2: What are the perceived factors already impacting teacher evaluations of CCSS by school site principals and do they transfer?

Research Question #3: What are the perceived changes (by principals) that teacher evaluation must undergo in light of Common Core implementation?

Each of these research questions and the themes related to the questions are discussed in this chapter as they relate to principal perceptions of teacher evaluation in CCSS implementation. Relationships across the data sets as well as data that was not necessarily re-occurring, yet seen as meaningful by the author, is presented as well.

After analyzing the data through the process of coding and recoding, the researcher found that the principals in her study had an over arching belief. They all shared the belief that evaluation must be process of growth for a teacher and that evaluation needs to transform. This process of change is what the author believes is transformational and what sets these principals apart from others. They all believed that change and learning both for themselves and their teachers happened over time through constant reflection. Throughout the data analysis process, the themes of reflection and learning through a process appear in multiple ways which will become evident from the discussion below.

Research Question # 2: What are the perceived factors already impacting teacher evaluations of CCSS by school site principals and do they transfer?

Table 22

Theme: Barriers to Effective Teacher Evaluation

Sub-Themes	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4	Participant 5	Participant 6
Time	X	X	X	X	X	X
Evaluation is Punitive	X	X		X	X	X
Evaluation Lacks Meaning	X	X	X	X		X

Time. Most of the participants felt that there wasn't enough time in a day, a week, a month, or even a year to adequately supervise and evaluate their teachers. All of the participants said that they make an effort to conduct classroom observations in all classrooms but are not very successful due to lack of time. The district and school's focus is implementing Common Core standards in order to prepare for full state-wide implementation in 2014-2015. To aid in this preparation, the district requires all principals to conduct frequent observations and to collect data from these walkthroughs. In addition to observations, the principals feel that they must also run programs, supervise children, and attend numerous mandatory meetings off campus. One participant said in reference to her evaluation, "Research shows that instruction is improved when leaders are in the classrooms and providing immediate feedback. How

can I do this when I am always in meetings at the district?” Another participant said that she sees the focus on Common Core as a step in the right direction but that there is not enough time in her day to make sure teachers are “doing it justice”.

Evaluation is punitive. The principals interviewed for the purpose of this study overwhelmingly agreed that the evaluation of teachers is punitive in nature. Many of the participants reported that currently, the district uses the evaluation process as a “gotcha” for teachers who are not performing well. One participant stated that the evaluation system is merely a way to dismiss poor teachers. Another principal echoed this perception by stating that,

The current teacher evaluation systems seems more like a plan for dismissal rather than a plan for growth. It breeds a spirit of fear and a culture that evaluation is a “gotcha-thing”. As soon as I do one negative evaluation that feeling spreads like wild fire. It can be very polarizing when a principal develops a habit of negative evaluations.

Evaluations lack meaning. In addition to principals perceiving that evaluations have a punitive purpose, they seem to believe that evaluations are not meaningful to teachers or to administrators. Many of the principals stated that the evaluation process in their district is a “one shot” occurrence. They conduct a formal observation and based on that one observation, write an evaluation that does not benefit the teacher. Principals agree that the evaluation should have meaning and allow growth instructionally, but that under the current model, there is only time to do

minimal observation. One principal stated that, “The evaluation process carries no weight. Its pretty much a one time shot and teachers know that.”

Research Question #3: What are the perceived changes (by principals) that teacher evaluation must undergo in light of Common Core implementation?

Table 23

Theme: Learning is a Process

Sub-Themes	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4	Participant 5	Participant 6
Growth-Oriented	X	X	X	X	X	X
Multiple Leadership Styles	X	X	X		X	X

Evaluation should be growth-oriented. The researcher noted that all of the principals interviewed were solution-oriented. Many of them perceive the evaluation system in need of great change but were willing to talk about what types of changes it should entail. All principals interviewed stated that the evaluation system should focus on growth instead of punitive measures that often have little or no effect on teacher improvement. The principals interviewed want teacher evaluation to be better aligned to Common Core and a continual, on-going process that improves instruction. Many of the principals reported to the researcher that administrators should be willing to take

on the role of “teacher-coach” and that the evaluation process should not be a “check-off list” but instead, a continuous coaching and reflective cycle. Sandra stated that,

Not only should evaluation be meaningful, but it should also help teachers achieve the next level of excellence, no matter what level they are currently at. Evaluation should contain professional development followed by coaching and observation. Teachers and principals need to reflect on that cycle in order to ensure continuous improvement. As an instructional leader, I need to offer feedback and encouragement to my teachers and be proactive. I need to help them get better in whatever area they need improvement.

Multiple leadership styles. The researcher defined transformational and transactional leadership for every interview participant and asked what style, if any, that they most align themselves with respect to teacher evaluation and the implementation of Common Core State Standards. All 6 participants responded with the perception that both styles are needed in evaluation, especially during the implementation of any new standard or initiative. Principals want to be transformational leaders. Participants perceive the transformational leadership style to be the mindset needed to transform teaching during a transformation of standards, yet every principal reported that because they have many different tasks at hand each day, transactional leadership is also a must.

Katrina stated that she hopes for transformational leadership every single day and looks for opportunities that will allow her to lead this way but that reality dictates otherwise.

Transformational leadership is what I hope for but the second one, transactional leadership, is the one I fall into. I want thoughtful and reflective conversations with my teachers but its sticky. I feel overwhelmed with mandates from the district and compliance, so I fall back into transactional leadership so that I stay in good graces with the district.

Thomas responded with an answer that supports this perception. He said that he feels he is transformational because he has committees and focuses on building teacher-leaders. He leads the way by offering teachers multiple opportunities to collaborate and plan. He says that he balances this with a transactional approach because with instructions there are “absolutes and focus areas”. He reports that he is mandated to conduct observations that reflect a “check-list”. He finds himself leading in a transactional manner just to “get everything done on that check-list”.

Additional Themes

During the interviews three more themes emerged. Although they are connected to the research questions, they do not answer them directly. Most of the participants felt a *fear to deviate* from the district set evaluation tool and the way teachers are evaluated, a *decline in their morale* and an *uncertainty* of how principals will be prepared to evaluate instruction of Common Core Standards.

Principals reported a level of fear when asked about how they might alter the way they evaluate teachers’ instruction of Common Core. The participants indicated a need to change, as described with earlier themes but they see the actual change as “risky” and “going against the district mandates”. Thomas stated that he wants to

“fully implement Common Core but does not have the backing of the district.” He says that he “...feels helpless and cannot push teachers into Common Core instruction without support from the district”. Marshall Charmaine stated that she felt that if she deviated from the norm, she would have the “...Board of Trustees after me”.

Principals also stated that they perceive a decline in morale. Many principals responded to the researcher that they are overwhelmed with district mandates and that they have lost their excitement for school leadership. Sandra stated that when she worked in another district, she felt “more supported” than she did with her current district. Jewell felt that although there was definitely an “air of frustration” that she was hopeful that would change given the fact that the district was in the midst of a leadership change.

Participants seemed to reflect a level of uncertainty for the future of the evaluation process. They were not sure how it would change or if it would change at all. All of the participants indicated that before the interview they had received little or no preparation or training to evaluate teachers. Each participant interviewed stated that they “...learned by doing it”. Each principal interviewed stated that there had been recent training with respect to evaluation but it was not enough to fully support teachers in a Common Core implementation. Each interviewee was hopeful that there would be beneficial training in the future that would support their vision of a growth-oriented and reflective teacher evaluation process.

Conclusion

The findings in Chapter 4 have revealed a plethora of principal perceptions and insights regarding the impact of the Common Core State Standards on the teacher evaluation process. Principals who participated in this study were very clear that meeting the demands of Common Core State Standards would be difficult if teachers did not have the opportunity to grow in their trade through coaching, reflection, and professional development. They also are adamant that in order for these elements to be successful, evaluation cannot be punitive but must focus on a growth-mindset. The idea of a growth-oriented evaluation approach is a lofty one and principals support the idea, however, participants agree that time must be given to principals. Time to coach, time to observe in classrooms, and time to attend high-quality professional development focused on evaluation.

The quantitative section supported many perceptions presented in the review of literature in Chapter 2. The qualitative section provided further insight based on principal views and feelings regarding their experiences within the current teacher evaluation system.

Chapter 5 summarizes and discusses these findings, makes additional connections with the review of literature and theoretical framework, provides recommendations and suggests leadership, policy, and research implications.

Chapter 5

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND CONCLUSIONS

Overview

There is a disconnect between what educational research states about teacher evaluation and what is understood, practiced, and perceived as valuable by school principals. Modern theory clearly states that the primary purpose of evaluation is to foster individual growth among teachers and provide teachers with the feedback needed to refine and improve their craft. In addition, the Common Core State standards will require a different way to evaluate teachers. To assist teachers, proper evaluation systems should be characteristic of four important criteria: teacher evaluation should be formed in a partnership between principal and teachers, evaluation should be part of an ongoing process, evaluation should encompass measures of student learning, and evaluation should be differentiated for teachers based on their individual needs. In the Common Core State Standard era, principals are called to be instructional leaders who act as catalysts for school improvement and change. However, while principals are attempting to make the transition from building managers to educational leaders, many of the evaluation instruments and procedures that are currently utilized are outdated.

These are remnants of an era in education that emphasized school management over instructional leadership. Before principals can apply the research of Common Core State Standards and perform as instructional catalysts, they must first understand and value the elements and dimensions that modern evaluation systems require.

Furthermore, principals' perceptions toward the necessary components of evaluation will determine the levels to which principals commit to the application of the research.

Chapter 5 provides a summary of the study findings and a discussion of the research findings as they relate to the information presented in the literature review. In an effort to contribute to the body of research, recommendations to improve the efforts of principals as they evaluate teachers as they implement Common Core are offered. The recommendations are based on findings from the study and come from the greater literature. Additionally, leadership and policy implications and areas for future research are presented in this chapter.

Research Questions

These questions guided the study:

1. Which of the following or combination of variables are significantly related regarding principal perceptions about teacher evaluation for Common Core?
2. What are the perceived factors already impacting teacher evaluations of CCSS by school site principals and do they transfer?
3. What are the perceived changes (by principals) that teacher evaluation must undergo in light of Common Core implementation?

Summary of the Research Findings

Research Question 1

Question 1 quantitatively inquired through the use of an online survey, whether there is any statistically significant relationship regarding principal perceptions of teacher evaluation and Common Core and the following or combination of variables:

- Gender
- Professional Background
- School Climate
- Ethnicity
- Age
- Years as a Principal

There was a significant negative correlation between ethnicity and age, $r = -.42$, $p = .018$, meaning that there was a weak correlation between ethnicity and age.

The two variables cannot be considered in a correlation and the data is therefore insignificant in the study. Although there was no strong statistical significance among variables, there was, however, strong evidence in the participant's survey responses that provided a rich amount of both quantitative and qualitative data that guides this section.

Research Question 2 and Research Question 3

Qualitative methodology guided the data collection and analysis of Question 2 and Question 3: What are the perceived factors already impacting teacher evaluations of CCSS by school site principals and do they transfer and what are the perceived changes (by principals) that teacher evaluation must undergo in light of Common Core implementation? The data included interview transcriptions and recordings from 6 interviews of Twin Rivers Unified School District school principals. The qualitative data collected from the survey data and interview transcriptions from 6 interviews of

school site principals. The qualitative data collected from the Principal interviews is described in 5 concrete themes:

1. Time
2. Evaluation is punitive
3. Evaluation lacks meaning
4. Evaluation should be growth oriented
5. Multiple leadership styles

Time. Most of the participants felt that there wasn't enough time in a day, a week, a month, or even a year to adequately supervise and evaluate their teachers. All of the participants said that they make an effort to conduct classroom observations in all classrooms but are not very successful due to lack of time. The district and school's focus is implementing Common Core standards in order to prepare for full state-wide implementation in 2014-2015. To aid in this preparation, the district requires all principals to conduct frequent observations and to collect data from these walkthroughs. In addition to observations, the principals feel that they must also run programs, supervise children, and attend numerous mandatory meetings off campus. One participant said in reference to her evaluation, "Research shows that instruction is improved when leaders are in the classrooms and providing immediate feedback. How can I do this when I am always in meetings at the district?" Another participant said that she sees the focus on Common Core as a step in the right direction but that there is not enough time in her day to make sure teachers are "doing it justice".

Evaluation is punitive. The principals interviewed for the purpose of this study overwhelmingly agreed that the evaluation of teachers is punitive in nature. Many of the participants reported that currently, the district uses the evaluation process as a “gotcha” for teachers who are not performing well. One participant stated that the evaluation system is merely a way to dismiss poor teachers. Another principal echoed this perception by stating that,

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Evaluations lack meaning. In addition to principals perceiving that evaluations have a punitive purpose, they seem to believe that evaluations are not meaningful to teachers or to administrators. Many of the principals stated that the evaluation process in their district is a “one shot” occurrence. They conduct a formal observation and based on that one observation, write an evaluation that does not benefit the teacher. Principals agree that the evaluation should have meaning and allow growth instructionally, but that under the current model, there is only time to do minimal observation. One principal stated that, “The evaluation process carries no weight. Its pretty much a one-time shot and teachers know that.”

Evaluation should be growth-oriented. The researcher noted that all of the principals interviewed were solutions oriented. Many of them perceive the evaluation

system in need of great change but were willing to talk about what types of changes it should entail. All principals interviewed stated that the evaluation system should focus on growth instead of punitive measures that often have little or no effect on teacher improvement. The principals interviewed want teacher evaluation to be better aligned to Common Core and a continual, on-going process that improves instruction. Many of the principals reported to the researcher that administrators should be willing to take on the role of “teacher-coach” and that the evaluation process should not be a “check-off list” but instead, a continuous coaching and reflective cycle. One principal stated that,

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transformational leaders. Participants perceive the transformational leadership style to be the mindset needed to transform teaching during a transformation of standards, yet every principal reported that because they have many different tasks at hand each day, transactional leadership is also a must.

One principal stated that she hopes for transformational leadership every single day and looks for opportunities that will allow her to lead this way but that reality dictates otherwise.

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Another principal responded with an answer that supports this perception. He said that he feels he is transformational because he has committees and focuses on building teacher-leaders. He leads the way by offering teachers multiple opportunities to collaborate and plan. He says that he balances this with a transactional approach because with instructions there are “absolutes and focus areas”. He reports that he is mandated to conduct observations that reflect a “check-list”. He finds himself leading in a transactional manner just to “get everything done on that check-list”.

Discussion

Research questions were formulated to measure differences in perceptions among principal’s gender, professional background, school culture, ethnicity, age and

years as a school principal. The fact that the different groups of principals did not indicate differences in perceptions indicated that attitudes across groups were generally consistent. This finding is significant as it indicates that regardless of school setting, years of experience, or gender, principals across the Twin Rivers Unified School District share similar views pertaining to teacher evaluation. Within the construct of the teacher evaluation system as an ongoing process, there was strong agreement among principals that teachers should receive frequent feedback as part of the process. Principals also strongly affirmed that evaluation should be formed in a partnership and considerate of student learning outcomes. These survey responses demonstrated that principals across the district perceived that the overall purpose of teacher evaluation was to promote growth in teachers. Principals did not affirm that teacher evaluation should be differentiated for teachers based on years of experience and individual needs, and neutral in their perceptions regarding teacher evaluation's effect on issues such as school mission and vision or teacher interpersonal skills.

Findings in the Context of Theoretical Framework

The theories formulated from qualitative data, in response to Question 3, showed illustration of teacher evaluation that could lead to an appropriate teacher evaluation model connected to Common Core State Standards via:

1. A growth-oriented teacher evaluation model
2. Principal leadership that involves both transformational leadership and transactional leadership

Teacher evaluation processes have evolved over time from simple end of the year checklists and summative narratives to more sophisticated clinical teacher evaluation models (Kersten & Israel, 2005). Similar to the findings of researchers Thomas Kersten and Marla Isreal (2005) who conducted a qualitative study that focused on principals' perceptions of evaluative approaches, this study found an underlying problem with the evaluation process being perceived as a tool for growth. The established culture of many public schools impedes the evaluative process as principals noted that teachers expected excellent evaluation ratings and resisted evaluative methods that deviated from the status quo. Some administrators indicated that they did not perceive school cultures as likely to embrace something new in evaluation systems and did not value the process as a tool for improvement, but rather something that the teacher and administrator were required to endure. The current study is similar to the one performed by Kersten and Isreal (2005), in that the focus was to reveal the perceptions of building principals in the area of teacher evaluation. However, unlike the previous study, this dissertation was qualitative and quantitative in nature and attempted to illustrate numerical values that corresponded to principals' perceptions of teacher evaluation as it pertains to Common Core State Standards.

After considering best practices for teacher evaluation with respect to Common Core State Standards, what are specific strategies the principal may use to create an effective teacher evaluation? In the next section, recommendations for principal professional development teacher evaluation are offered.

Recommendations

Recommendations have been examined using the AI framework to ensure the recommendations are positive and appropriate for all members of the system.

Specific Strategies and Best Practices for Teacher Evaluation (From Study

Findings and the Greater Literature)

- This area of research should be expanded to include a larger sample in order to reach a statistical significance among the variables.
- To emphasize positive, reflective teacher evaluation, consider an evaluation model that includes coaching, reflection and mentoring by a site principal. The principal's role shifts from transactional leader to transformational leader and becomes a support provider guiding the teacher as he or she moves an on-going process that is much more than one formal observation.
- Consider labeling the evaluation process differently in a way that reflects the growth model and lessens fear from teachers.
- Develop an evaluation model that has embedded Cycle of Inquiry (Copeland, 2009). Principals would guide and coach teachers through the identification of problems, developing systems and opportunities for growth and professional development, creating opportunities for informal and formal observations, the implementation of reflective conversations about what should improve or what is working well, and taking time to understand what happened during the cycle.

- Implement research-based professional development for site administrators that focuses on teacher evaluation. Principals should be involved in on-going professional development that helps them to understand how the evaluation process can improve teacher effectiveness and deepen teacher understanding of the rigors of Common Core Standards.
- Create Professional Learning Communities (PLC) or Cohorts of teachers who are being evaluated in one given year. Provide these PLC's or Cohorts opportunities to move through the Cycle of Inquiry (Copeland, 2009) with group support. Teachers would identify problems, set goals, conduct peer observations and offer meaningful feedback, have reflective conversations over student achievement data and observations, and reflect on what happened to their practice throughout the experience. The school principal would facilitate meetings and conduct separate observations, but the areas of growth and the cohort of teachers would determine professional development needs. The principal would provide professional development opportunities and protected time to plan and analyze data. Within this model, self and peer evaluation would drive most of the inquiry.
- Educate and foster collaboration with Teacher's Unions. Focus negotiations on growth and innovation for teachers and students. Leaders must be transparent and partner with the Unions in order to secure their buy-in and to build trust.

Limitations of the Study

As the study progressed, limitations related to generalization, principal supervision, district unrest, and limited survey participation became apparent. Through the limitations listed here, many recommendations for future study were recognized.

- The researcher violated an underlying assumption by only including 31 survey responses, which created a weak sample size. In future research, a sample size of over 100 participants would be more desirable.
- The researcher should have surveyed principals from more than one school district. The surveys would have provided information about how principals in other districts perceive evaluation. Although the researcher believes that the findings of the research can be generalized to other principal populations, extending the survey would have provided a stronger argument.
- Both interviewees and survey respondents were concerned that their district supervisors would analyze their responses. The researcher reminded the participants that every survey and interview would be held in strictest confidentiality. The researcher believes that this fear may have affected the participant's responses, which is often a problem with self-reporting types of data.
- It became apparent that some principals in the Twin Rivers Unified School District were uncomfortable responding to the survey. Many principals, who elected not to participate, told the researcher that they were concerned that the

district superintendent, who is also a member of the researcher's dissertation committee, would analyze their responses.

- During the months of research, there was political turmoil occurring in the school district. In addition, the district had undergone reorganization that caused fear and stress for many of its employees. Many principals reported that because of the turmoil and change, they did not want to participate in this study because they feared that the results would be used to reassign or terminate their positions. Some principals even were fearful that there would be district retribution if they were to respond in a way that put the district or their supervisors in a negative light. This fear may have affected responses in that principals may not have been truly honest with items on the survey that seemed controversial. In addition, interviewees may not have freely spoken in fear that what they said could be traced back to them. When the researcher began to conduct interviews and e-mail surveys, there seemed to be more principal confidence because there had been a recent change in leadership that was seen as a positive change.

Leadership Applications

A leader at any level may use the information from Appreciative Inquiry Theory as a tool to facilitate change. A principal or district administrator using Appreciative Inquiry to facilitate the decision-making process might take these steps: Discovery stage – An understanding of the “what is and what has been.” The school principal generates information about opportunities for growth and professional

development and the possibilities the Cycle of Inquiry (Copeland, 2009) can offer teachers. In the Discovery stage, the principal starts the discussion with a positive interaction about what is working well with teacher evaluation. Additionally, the principal may share research discussing how evaluation can be most productive. This data and research are thoroughly discussed.

Next, in the Dream stage, the principal uses the data from the Discovery stage. The principal guides the teachers to identify “what might be”. The principal and teachers focus on what the end result should be. Ideas from team members are brought forward and the principal and the teachers respectfully consider every idea.

Next, in the Design stage, the principal and the teacher team determine “what should be”. Individuals are encouraged to brainstorm specific steps toward achieving the goal.

Finally, the Destiny stage provides a vision of “what will be”. This stage is ongoing and requires the principal and teacher team to keep the goal in mind as the plan is carried out. When adjustments need to be made, the group meets and can move back to the Dream stage, or a different stage, as needed.

As the teacher team carries out the plan, it is important the principal remember AI is based on mutual trust and safety between principals, teachers, and students, and to consistently provide feedback in a positive way (Yballe & O'Connor, 2000). To activate change and implementation, employing transformational leadership is central. Leadership is about having vision, focus, and building trusting relationships (Bolman & Deal, 2008). According to Nevarez and Wood (2010), by adding to those

exceptional traits, leaders who can empower, inspire, and motive individuals is a demonstration of transformational leaders. These leaders “serve as role models to others, emulating the characteristics, behaviors, and actions which they seek from all members of their organization” (p. 59). They address issues with a team approach, they intellectually challenge those involved, and provide support.

Utilizing the character traits of a transformational leader to aid in modifying teacher evaluation, building viable teacher relationships with other educational leaders and ensuring alignment between CCSS assessment and teaching approaches are critical. If any one of these recommendations were embraced it would be necessary to have transformational leaders at the helm. These leaders would have to diligently work with educational leaders in the federal, state, district, administration, teacher, and teacher union arenas. They would be responsible for generating dialogues regarding the issue that teachers are not being effectively evaluated nor prepared for teaching the standards within our current educational system.

For years, the educational leaders have complained that the evaluation system has not worked proficiently and is in need of reform. Although experts have diligently tried to implement changes, it is imperative to establish a connection between the people who are living it, with the people who are not, yet are involved in making decisions pertaining to education. Utilizing a transformational leader, who can build those trusting relationships and forge ahead with a vision and focus to appropriately address this issue, could ignite these necessary changes and vital connections.

Policy Implications

Policy Related to Theory

Appreciative Inquiry Theory permeates the work of the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) and the California Department of Education (CDE) (Brackenridge & Klein-Williams, 2009). BTSA and the CDE developed a teaching continuum based on the 6 California Standards of the Teaching Profession. The tool was created to help principals and support providers discuss and consider instructional quality and “continuous program improvement” (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing and California Department of Education, (1997).

Critical Policy Analysis and Action, and Informed Decision-Making are also significant to the implementation of change. Implementing any of the above recommendations would not only make an impact in the classrooms, they would also affect educational decisions made at the federal and state level. Wanting to modify the teacher evaluation system in California could prompt critical policy analysis regarding the California Standards of the Teaching Profession (CSTP). As a consequence this could potentially generate changing the teacher union bargaining system not just for California but for other states as well. Comparable to critical policy analysis and action, in order to make an informed decision regarding education, there needs to be ample research and several recommendations to consider. Based on the findings from this study and the review of literature, five relevant recommendations were generated. Although the findings from the study were viable to the issue, to make it more influential and communal, there needs to be more research conducted.

Areas for Future Research

More research needs to be done on the efficacy of current teacher evaluation models, specifically those models that have a punitive approach.

A large-scale, long-term study involving many districts over multiple states is needed to determine exactly what benefits teachers are receiving from teacher evaluation. What purpose does the evaluation serve? Is the typical principal working to improve academics, providing a reflective evaluation, coaching veteran and beginning teachers, or providing quality professional development that is focused on goals or areas of need? Time and funding can be a challenge for principals as they evaluate teachers. Valuable research would look into who provides principals with adequate training on teacher coaching and evaluation.

This study only skims the surface of principal perceptions regarding the teacher evaluation with respect to Common Core State Standards implementation. After reviewing the literature in Chapter 2, there were many qualitative studies that addressed this topic and the relevance. In contrast, there were very few quantitative studies pertaining to this topic. The dispute with this is that qualitative data alone cannot convey the entire story. It can only partially represent what it was intended to measure, just like computerized data from a state test cannot completely measure student achievement. Future research needs to embrace additional quantitative studies in this area.

The researcher focused on K-8 elementary schools, in one district, and did not investigate principal perceptions at traditional middle schools or high schools. Because this study was a mixed method, it was appropriate to interview a small quantity of participants. However, because of the significance of this topic and urgency for it to be more extensively researched, additional data needs to be obtained from more principals. This additional research should be conducted using surveys, one-on-one interviews and focus groups; therefore expanding the arena for obtaining data, yet not losing the qualitative characteristics. To obtain more widespread principal perceptions regarding the impact of teacher evaluation in a Common Core implementation, the interviews, surveys and focus groups should be conducted in other districts located in California.

Because the findings suggested an impact on teachers in relation to Common Core State Standards instruction towards learning and student achievement, it would be noteworthy to interview teachers using one-on-one interviews and focus groups as well. It would be thought provoking to investigate teacher perceptions regarding different evaluation approaches, the frequency and variety of observation, if they are engaged towards learning, and how they feel about their evaluators. A case study involving teachers who implement the PLC model of evaluation would be of interest if a new teacher evaluation model is considered. A close look at successes and challenges of this PLC would support the vision as it is rolled out to a larger population.

If we want to support the growth mind set in principals, teachers and students then the educational pendulum needs to be swinging somewhere in the middle, not favoring one side. We, as a nation, need to take heed of the literature as well as this study in order to restructure teacher evaluation, so that teachers can support our children as they undertake some of the most rigorous standards in American educational history.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Consent to Participate in Survey Research

Consent to Participate in Survey Research

You are being asked to participate in research which will be conducted by Carrie A. Underwood, M.Ed., a doctoral student at California State University, Sacramento.

The study will investigate how principals feel that Common Core State Standards will impact teacher evaluation.

You will be asked questions about your background, education and your perceptions of Common Core State Standards and how you feel they will impact teacher evaluation. The questionnaires may require up to half an hour of your time. If you agree to be contacted, you may also be asked later to participate in an interview on these topics. The interview could also last up to 45 minutes.

Some of the items in the questionnaires may seem personal, but you don't have to answer any questions if you don't want to. You may answer as much or as little of the survey as you wish.

You may gain additional insight into factors that effect teacher evaluation or you may not personally benefit from participating in this research. It is hoped that the results of the study will be beneficial for district and school administrators as they develop teacher evaluations that align with the Common Core.

Your responses on the survey will be anonymous. All results obtained in this study will be confidential. All data collected will be stored in a locked file cabinet by the researcher and destroyed no later than May 2015.

You will not receive any compensation for participating in this study.

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. You are free to decide not to participate or to decide at a later time to stop participating. The researcher may also end participation at any time.

Your participation in this research study does not have any effect on your employment status nor the performance evaluation process.

If you have any questions about this research, you may contact Carrie Underwood, M.Ed. at (916) 275-0088 or by e-mail at carrie.underwood@twinriversusd.org. My faculty advisor, Dr. Frank Lilly can also be contacted at (916) 278-4120 or by e-mail at frilly@csus.edu.

By completing this survey, you acknowledge your willingness to participate in this research.

Signature of Participant

Date

APPENDIX B

Principal Perception on How the Implementation of Common Core State
Standards Effects Teacher Evaluation - Survey

Principal Perception on How the Implementation of Common Core State
Standards Effects Teacher Evaluation- Survey

Directions:

Please choose the most appropriate answers for the following profile questions. Put an
“X” in the box next to your answer for each question

1. Profile

Gender: Male Female

Ethnicity: Asian/Pacific Islander Black Caucasian Native American
Hispanic

Other

Age:

20-24 25-29 30-34 35-39 40-44 45-49

50-54 55-59 60-64 65-69 70-74 75 & Up

Total Years as a Principal:

0-4 5-9 10-14 15-19

20-24 25-29 30-34 35 & Up

Amount of Common Core State Standards Training

- None
- A little (*i.e., I have read about them*)
- Some (*i.e., I have read and talked with others about them*)
- Quite a bit (*i.e., I have read, talked, and am thinking about updating curriculum*)
- Extensive (*i.e., I've gone to trainings/webinars as well as read talked and possibly started working on curriculum within school/district*)

Based on Accountability Reporting, what is your perceived level of performance of your school:

- Excelling
- Highly Performing
- Performing Plus
- Performing
- Failing
- I don't know

Indicate your professional background

- Teacher
 - Elementary
 - Secondary
 - Preschool
 - Adult Education
- School psychologist
- School Counselor
- Athletics Coach
- Other (Indicate) _____

What credentials do you hold?

- Multiple Subject Credential Administrative
- Single Subject (Indicate subject area (s)) PPS
- Special Education

1. Principal Perceptions of Teacher Evaluation in Common Core

Directions:

Please rate 1-10 for each of the statements listed below. Your responses should be what you believe the situation in your school will be in with regard to the California Common Core State Standards. Check only one response for each item and place an "X" in the box that most aligns with your perceptions.

4. The evaluation process helps teachers to acquire the knowledge and skills to make decisions and act as responsible members of society.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Disagree

Agree

5. The evaluation process helps teachers use various ongoing assessments to monitor the effectiveness of instruction of the Common Core State Standards.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Disagree

Agree

6. The evaluation process helps teachers align the assessment with the goals, objectives, and instructional strategies of the Common Core State Standards.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Disagree

Agree

7. The evaluation process helps teachers demonstrate appropriate preparation for instruction of Common Core State Standards.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Disagree

Agree

8. The evaluation process helps teachers choose and implement appropriate methodology and varied instructional strategies that address Common Core State Standards.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Disagree

Agree

9. The evaluation process helps teachers create a positive learning environment in Common Core implementation.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Disagree

Agree

10. The evaluation process helps teachers effectively manage student behaviors in Common Core State Standards.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Disagree

Agree

11. The evaluation process helps teachers engage in appropriate interpersonal relationships with students, parents, community, and staff.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Disagree

Agree

12. The evaluation process helps teachers engage in professional development activities consistent with the goals and objectives of the building, district, and state Common Core State Standards implementation.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Disagree

Agree

13. The evaluation process helps teachers engage in professional development for Common Core State Standards.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Disagree

Agree

14. The evaluation process helps teachers assist in maintaining a safe and orderly environment that supports Common Core State Standards.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Disagree

Agree

15. The evaluation process helps teachers collaborate in the development and/or implementation of the district's vision, mission, and goals of Common Core State Standards.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Disagree

Agree

16. The evaluation process in the area of mentoring provides teachers the opportunity for dialogue that deepens understanding of instructional strategies needed for improvement in Common Core.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Disagree

Agree

17. The leadership style of a principal effects the way he/she evaluates teachers.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Disagree

Agree

18. School culture effects teacher evaluation at my school.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Disagree

Agree

Directions: Please openly describe your perceptions of the following questions or statements.

19. Please identify the items of the TRUSD Teacher Evaluation that have the strongest influence on improving Common Core State Standards teacher performance in the classroom.

20. Please identify the items on the TRUSD Teacher Evaluation that have the least influence on improving Common Core State Standards teacher performance in the classroom.

21. In what ways do you feel that teacher evaluation will change with respect to Common Core?

22. What is your role in supporting teachers as you evaluate them in the implementation of common core?

23. Are you willing to participate in an interview based on this topic?

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts with me.

APPENDIX C

Consent to Participate in Interview Research

Consent to Participate in Interview Research

You are being asked to participate in research which will be conducted by Carrie A. Underwood, M.Ed., a doctoral student at California State University, Sacramento.

The study topic is an in-depth analysis of how principals perceive the Common Core will impact teacher evaluation.

You will be asked interview questions about your background, education and your perceptions of Common Core State Standards and how you feel they will impact teacher evaluation.

The interview will take approximately 45 minutes of your time. The researcher will provide you with a transcript of your interview for you to review and approve. You may be contacted at a later date with follow up questions which may take another hour. Follow up questions will only be needed to further clarify responses given at the time of the interview.

Some of the questions may be personal. At any given time you do not have to answer a question if you do not wish to do so. You may choose to participate as much or little in the interview as you wish. You can withdraw from the interview at any time. During the interview you may request to stop the recording at any time to discuss or clarify how you wish to respond to a question or topic before proceeding.

With your permission, the interview will be recorded and later transcribed in partial or in full. Only first names will be used in the interviews and you may decide what name you would like to use. A copy of the interview will be given to those interviewed.

You may or may not personally benefit from participating in this research. It is a goal that the results of the study will be beneficial to the graduate student researcher, and/or for others who are doing research on the topic. Parts of the interview might or might not be used as part of a scholarly paper and/or academic presentation. Your participation in this research study does not have any effect on your employment status nor the performance evaluation process.

You will not receive any compensation for participating in this study.

If you have any questions about this research, you may contact Carrie Underwood, M.Ed. at (916) 275-0088 or by e-mail at carrie.underwood@twinriversusd.org. My faculty advisor, Dr. Frank Lilly can also be contacted at (916) 278-4120 or by e-mail at frlilly@csus.edu.

Your signature below indicates that you have read this page and agree to participate in the research.

Signature of Participant

Date

APPENDIX D
Interview Questions

Interview Questions

1. Describe what you believe are key elements that you feel are important in a teacher observation/evaluation system.
2. Explain what changes, if any, you would like to see to the teacher observation/evaluation system.
3. As a site principal, tell me how you view your role in teacher evaluation.
4. The California Common Core Standards are a transformation of accountability standards. Describe how you think the CCSS could change teacher evaluation.
5. In what ways could the professional background of a principal impact teacher evaluation?
6. Explain the ways that school culture can impact teacher evaluation. Is school culture something you think about as you navigate evaluation and supervision, how so?
7. Tell me about your professional background? When did you decide to become a principal? What event (s) was the impetus to your administrative career?
8. Explain how professional background could play a role in how you might evaluate teachers on Common Core.
9. Describe your previous training or professional development in evaluation of teachers and their instruction.
10. What does good instruction look like? What does it feel like?

Listen to these definitions and descriptions of two leadership styles:

“Transformational leadership enhances the motivation, morale, and performance of followers through a variety of mechanisms. These include connecting the follower's sense of identity and self to the project and the collective identity of the organization; being a role model for followers that inspires them and makes them interested; challenging followers to take greater ownership for their work, and understanding the strengths and weaknesses of followers, so the leader can align followers with tasks that enhance their performance.”

“Transactional Leadership focuses on the role of supervision, organization, and group performance; transactional leadership is a style of leadership in which the leader promotes compliance of his followers through both rewards and punishments. Unlike Leaders using the transactional approach are not looking to change the future, they are looking to merely keep things the same. Leaders using transactional leadership as a model pay attention to followers' work in order to find faults and deviations. This type of leadership is effective in crisis and emergency situations, as well as when projects need to be carried out in a specific fashion.”

11. Which leadership style mostly resonates with you as the style you carry out on a day to day basis?

12. Of these two leadership models, which one would be most aligned to evaluation of teachers during the implementation of a new set of standards, specifically, Common Core?
13. If neither of these styles best describes your own leadership style, describe one that resonates with you.

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