Teacher Evaluations: Building Intrinsic Motivation

By

Stacey Carruthers
Bachelor of Arts, Concordia University College of Alberta, 2000
Bachelor of Education, Concordia University College of Alberta, 2002

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

MASTERS OF EDUCATION

In the Department of Curriculum and Instruction

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University of Victoria
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Abstract

This thesis project presents a general background of teacher’s evaluations systems. Why they are used, and how effective they can be for teachers, their teaching, and motivation. After a brief personal account, the literature review provides a background of how teacher evaluations have rewarded teachers in the past and present in various countries. Moving away from the notion of rewarding teachers with merit pay, based on student achievement levels, the literature provides a look at evaluations developing intrinsic motivation, and giving recognition, in non-monetary forms to help promote teacher accountability and improvement. The project focuses on a small evaluation process, to be used in individual schools, to effectively motivate teachers and promote their professional development.

Keywords: teacher, evaluation, merit, recognition
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Dedication

The following thesis project is dedicated to my family and friends. Without the encouragement and unfading belief in me, I would never take on this journey and completed it with pride. I thank them for their continued support.

Supervisory Committee

Dr. Chris Filler (Department of Curriculum and Instruction)  
Supervisor

Dr. Todd Milford (Department of Curriculum and Instruction)  
Departmental Member
Chapter 1 - Background

“Whether it is merit pay or enhanced PD opportunities, we must reward the efforts of extraordinary teachers,”

-Cold Lake area principal, Ron Young

I did not become a teacher for the salary. I have wanted to be a teacher since I was in elementary school. I love to teach. It is not just my job, but a true passion of mine. In just a short thirteen years working in elementary schools, I have seen the profession change in so many ways. There has been many changes in leadership and a shift in respect for teachers. I have, and continue to, defend my profession to family, friends and strangers as they critic and poke fun at the amount of pay and time off teachers receive for simply ‘hanging out with kids all day long’. I see the media glorify teaching as a needed public service, and I see ministers, within my province, criticize and belittle the work and successes achieved by colleagues and myself. However, with all joking aside, many individuals I am close with can see the amount of work, time, and devotion I put into my profession and the students that I teach. They have observed my ups and downs and seen the recognition received, or the lack of given, for constantly trying to improve my teaching, my students, and the institution I teach in.

This chapter will explain my background and how the recognition of teachers became a focus of mine for this thesis project. I believe it is important for districts and schools to have systems recognizing the efforts of their teachers, and I will describe the significance of these systems in educational settings. Recognition is important to all professions, including teachers, because it provides positive and constructive feedback to motivate employees to improve their overall efforts (Viadero, 2009). Some districts have implemented merit systems successfully
around the world (Contreras & Rau, 2012; Fryer, 2013; Pipho, 1983; Williams & Engel, 2012), in order to reward teachers with what is perceived as excellent work. The research, which is discussed further in chapter 2, shows that only in some areas, the implementation of merit pay for teachers increased student achievement (Guis, 2012). Yet, studies differ on the effects monetary incentives have on overall job satisfaction (Guis, 2013). Barber and Klein (1983) state that teachers who received merit pay had only satisfactory job satisfaction. With evaluations focusing mainly on student achievement, there was a decline in cooperation and collaboration. This was due to most teachers becoming competitive in order to earn rewards or gain recognition for themselves (Barber & Klein, 1983). Although, forms of recognition for teachers exist throughout Canada, the province of Alberta, and in particular, within my own current school district, they are not promoted enough for teachers to strive for them, and they are based on nominations, not evaluated skills.

My Background

For as long as I can remember I have always wanted to be a teacher. I remember how teachers used to inspire me, the satisfactory student, to keep trying. My decisions to pursue my education degree was not based on salary grids or possible hierarchical positions. I would be lying if I said the summer, winter and spring holidays were not appealing, however, I chose the teaching profession because it involves inspiring children, creativity, and giving back. These were my personal reasons for becoming a teacher. Achieving these goals and aspirations within the teaching profession, are my own personal merit. Seeing students succeed gives me intrinsic motivation to continue to excel at my job. When I receive additional praise or recognition from administration and/or the school district, it always make me feel like I am doing a good job and
that someone has taken the time to recognize I have worked hard. It is also nice to see colleagues around me recognized. This extrinsic motivation inspires me to keep working hard and to find new innovative ways to help my students learn and develop.

While researching evaluation systems and processes used to determine teacher efficiency, I discovered that many of the current systems use student achievement marks as the indicator of teacher competencies (Barber & Klein, 1983; Jones, 2013; Poulos, Culberston, Piazza & D’Entremont, 2014; Williams & Engel, 2013). Of the thirteen years I have been teaching, eleven of them have been teaching a grade level that mandates me to administer year-end Provincial achievement test. Every year, these test results are shared with individual students’ parents, newspapers publish local district overall school marks, and the Fraser Institute publicizes each school and district, in a ranking order of highest to lowest (Fraser, n.d.). I have sat through many staff meetings and parent council meetings going over the results with colleagues and parents. Hours have been spent reviewing the exam, paying particular attention to areas of weakness, and comparing overall standings to other districts throughout the province. In many evaluation and recognition systems, this would be the variable to determine if I have excelled in my profession. My skill set would be judged or determined by two tests that could be influenced by whether or not a group of eight and nine year old students had a good night’s sleep, did not have a fight with a peer on their way to school, and/or have a stable home environment.

I have a large, extensive collection of ‘Thank You’ cards and letters from administration and parents, recognizing me for conducting various extracurricular events around the school and for my day to day efforts with my students. These are an extremely nice gesture of appreciation. However, the last evaluation I received was during my probationary year, ten years ago. As the
years have passed and changes have occurred in leadership, whether it is a change in administration, programming, district leadership, etc…, I have made the observation that some colleagues receive more observations followed by more recognition than others. In my opinion ‘likability’ plays a large role in whether or not incentives, or recognition is given and evaluations tend to be subjective and biased. It can be very obvious, on a staff, when other individuals are liked more by administration than others. I have seen staff receive fees paid for professional development, days in lieu, extra non instructional time, and referendums, all given as recognition for things that are equally as extensive and inclusive as jobs I have done and do. I have also seen teachers, who have taught longer than myself, be evaluated at the digression of the administration. This tends to cause a negative outlook on evaluations and the particular teacher who is suddenly, or randomly being evaluated. In terms of job satisfaction, these events have caused me to withdrawal from school wide activities and I have placed all of my motivation back into my classroom and the students I teach. Removing myself from the constant battle of adult attention seeking, has freed up more of my planning time, and my students, and their work receive much more time and attention. I find that when I do not receive recognition for my involvement around the school and in my classroom I judge and compare myself to others, who receive it. I evaluate myself, negatively, because there is not a system of evaluation to show me my strengths and areas of weakness, and there is no one using a system to effectively motivate me.

Across Canada

One of the strongest influences against continuous evaluations, for teachers in each province, is teacher unions (Anderssen, 2010). Of all the provinces in Canada, Ontario is the only province that evaluates their teachers (Maharaj, 2014). The evaluations, which are mandated by
Ontario Education, are not conducted every year, but rather every five years (Maharaj, 2014). The idea that teachers are rarely, if ever evaluated within their profession does not provide the profession or the educational field with a “comprehensive look at the practice” (Maharaj, 2014 p. 9). The evaluation of teachers begins in post-secondary institutions (Barr, 1949). The processes of becoming a teacher involves many evaluations that assess an individual’s ability to understand and deliver the set curriculum (Poulos, Culberston, Piazza & D’Entremont, 2014). There are even areas of evaluations that are specific to the interactions with staff, students, parents and community involvement (Poulos, Culberston, Piazza & D’Entremont, 2014). Beginning teachers are always being evaluated, and as Barr (1949) points out, these rating scales are not a new concept for educators. Barr (1949), states “what teachers want is fair, valid, and reliable evaluation” (p. 6). Maharaj (2014) looked at varying aspects of effective teaching, teacher evaluations and Canadian schools in his article Effective Management of Human Capital in Schools: Recommendations to Strengthen the Teaching Profession and states that teacher evaluations are not only used to focus on teachers that are performing below school board standards, but also provide teachers with regular assessments and feedback which “all teachers need and can benefit from” (Maharaj, 2014 p.8).

Each year, many Canadian teachers are nominated for the Prime Minister’s Awards for teaching excellence (2014 Nomination Guidelines). Nominations for the award are completed by individuals or teams that are not directly related to the nominated teacher. A strict set of guidelines provides nominators with the qualifications that are required for individuals to be nominated and to be considered for such an award. The criteria includes the nominee’s years of service, and they must hold a permanent teaching certification within the current teaching prov
ince, with good standing (2014 Nomination Guidelines). During the selection process, recipients are selected based on the evidence that the teacher displays “innovative and exemplary teaching practices”, “digital literacy and information and communications technologies (ICT) in the classroom”, “student skills development”, “student achievement and participation”, and “teacher commitment and leadership” (2014 Nomination Guidelines). This evidence is not in the form of a formal evaluation though. Nominations can be filled out online or printed and mailed in for review. Each year up to ten recipients will receive Certificates of Excellence which includes a $5000 financial reward (2014 Nomination Guidelines). The financial awards given are not a bonus or merit for the teacher. Rather it is an award given to the teacher, which must be spent in conjunction with the particular school the teacher was at during the time of the nomination.

However, the institution does not have to provide any statement or evaluation showing the nominated teacher met the standards or mission of a school or school board. The claim for this form of recognition is that it helps promote lifelong learning and innovative teaching as it does not narrow it’s recipients to one teacher. Up to ten can be chosen each year, rewarding teachers of all different teaching styles and abilities for their hard work and dedication.

**Current Context**

Currently I work for one of the top five school boards within the province of Alberta. Districts throughout the province follow the teacher evaluation policy and practices stated in the School Act, developed by Alberta Education (Teacher Growth, Supervision and Evaluation Policy). The provincial general procedures indicate that schools shall implement policies that provide “a review mechanism” for teachers (Teacher Growth, Supervision and Evaluation Policy). At the beginning of every school year I comply with the Alberta teacher growth policy and
TEACHER EVALUATIONS

develop a professional growth plan. When developing this plan, I have to review areas of my profession that I want to grow in and develop goals I want to obtain during the ten month school year. Under the recommendation of the Alberta Teachers Association, professional plans should have no more than three, clearly stated objectives accompanied by strategies that may be used to complete the goals (Teacher Growth, Supervision and Evaluation Policy). Although my district’s “review mechanism” is to meet twice a year with my administration to review the goals, I am the only that develops them and assesses how I have achieved the goals. I am never given any period for review, feedback or assistance in fulfilling the goals throughout the year. We meet once at the beginning of the year so I can state my goals and strategies, then, at the end of the year, for me to show how I achieved or did not achieve my goals. To complete the professional growth process I fill out a small review questionnaire which is kept on file to show that I completed yet another professional growth plan. This is supposed to give me motivation to improve within my profession? After fourteen years, I feel like I just keep going through the motions.

In order to obtain permanent certification in Alberta, teachers typically receive evaluations during a probationary contract (Teacher Growth, Supervision and Evaluation Policy). Once this evaluation has taken place a teacher can be offered a permanent contract with the board that completed the evaluation. When a permanent contract has been obtained, the teacher is no longer evaluated unless the teacher makes a request for evaluation or the administrator feels it is necessary to reevaluate a teacher. If the latter situation arises, it can sometime been seen as a negative situation by the teacher who under goes the evaluation.

Although, the set evaluation standards claim to effectively evaluate teachers, the recognition programs developed at the provincial and local district level are given without any evalua
tion evidence. The province recognizes teachers by offering the Excellence in Teaching Awards Program (Excellence in Teaching Awards Program). The Excellence in Teaching Awards Program has been an Alberta Education tradition since 1989. It awards Alberta teachers, through nominations, who are “creative, innovative and effective” (Excellence in Teaching Awards Program, n.d., para. 1). Guidelines describe a nominee’s eligibility, restrictions and the criteria for election. Teachers can be nominated by administration, colleagues and/or parents. The recipient is awarded the title of Alberta’s Excellence in Teaching Award winner and receives a “special dinner and ceremony” (Excellence in Teaching Awards Program, n.d., para. 3). As well, their school, not the recipient, receives monetary awards.

Individual districts throughout the province offer additional and local recognition for their teachers. The district I currently work for, and have since I graduated with my education degree, recognizes their teachers with long service awards, a promotion of learning award, and a very recently introduced, leadership award (Administrative Procedures Manual). The latter two recognitions are named after and are given in honor of previous superintendents that made positive influences and changes within the district. Long service awards are given to permanent staff who have been with the district “in five year increments” (Elk Island Public Schools, Procedures). Awards, which vary depending on the years of service for each individual, are given at a reception. Employees with greater than twenty-five years will receive a celebratory dinner (Elk Island Public Schools, Procedures).

The Terry Gunderson Award for Promotion of Lifelong Learning (Elk Island Public Schools, Procedures) is awarded to a chosen teacher each year. Teachers are nominated by other
permanent district employees and must meet a set criteria, which is listed on the district website (Elk Island Public Schools, Procedures).

The Bruce Beliveau Leadership Award (Elk Island Public Schools, 2015) was introduced to the district employees in January of 2015 and will receive its first recipient in the spring of 2015 at the district's long service awards (Elk Island Public Schools, 2015). The recipient's nominator must demonstrate that the nominated individual exhibits “a commitment to policies and practices”, “innovative risk taking”, fosters an environment that “motivates and inspires others”, “demonstrates exemplary relationship building”, and displays “integrity and high personal standards” (Elk Island Public Schools, 2015). Like the federal teaching in excellence award, these recognitions do not require any form or proof of an evaluation showing the teacher meets, exceeds or has shown improvement within the teaching profession.

Under my current school administration I have experienced small, short visits from my principal and assistant principal. I have become informed that these, non-interruptive visits, are called “walkthroughs” (David, 2008). Upon the first “visit”, I inquired if my principal needed anything, to which I was told to ignore her, she was just “popping in”. I thought nothing of these small visits as more than just a quick connection with the students. However, while at a staff meeting a colleague inquired about these such short visits and we were informed they were called “walkthroughs”. The intention, according my administration, is to quickly give an overview of how the classrooms are working and the connection teachers have with the students. As a staff we were asked to ignore any walkthroughs that would occur and to continue on as normal. Walkthroughs are conducted in a variety of different ways, however, the intent of them appears to be the same (David, 2008). Walkthroughs are intended to provide various individuals, within
the teaching profession (administration, consultants, teachers, etc…), with an overview of improvement (David, 2008). In my current context the walkthroughs are being used as a form of evaluation, without warning and little to no feedback. This form of practice does not appear to follow the intended guidelines of the walkthrough process (David, 2008), which will be discussed more in-depth in Chapter 2.

The Problem

Evaluations are intended to help individuals grow within their profession. They do not need to be focused on the negative or lacking areas of an employee. Evaluations can be a form of positive development. Preservice teachers experience this as they develop their understanding of curriculum and how to teach. Evaluations should be viewed positively, and be an expectation of teaching. Friends of mine in public service professions are required to fulfill various course renewals and evaluations from year to year to maintain their job status. Why are teachers not held to the same standard when other comparing profession are? More recently, the previous Alberta Minister of Education, alluded to the idea of implementing merit pay into the teaching profession. Merit pay would be additional monetary forms of pay given to individual teachers who demonstrate excellent teaching qualities. Rewards, merit and recognition have all proven to be motivational forms for employees in various professions. Without a standard, consistent evaluation for teachers, merit cannot be rewarded. The initial goal of merit pay for teachers was to attract individuals to the profession (Barber & Klein, 1983; Pipho, 1983). By offering incentives, in the form of money, teaching jobs quickly filled. Erin Anderssen (2010), states in her Globe and Mail article that teachers are paid based on years of education and years of experiences with regular yearly increments, otherwise known as single salary grids (Dee & Keys, 2004). Teach

I have chosen to focus my project on evaluations and recognition for teachers, for personal reasons. As stated above, I continue to set my own goals each year based on what I want to focus on, but I have no real direction as to what areas within my profession I need to truly build on, or what areas I have strength in. Also, a number of exemplary awards are available to teachers federally, provincially and locally. Each of these awards recognize the efforts of teachers within education. All of these awards are also awarded based on nominations, not evaluations. The nominations are written essays describing why an individual or a group of individuals believe a teacher is worthy of receiving the recognition. In most cases, those nominating a fellow staff member are friends, and the selection could be seen as being based on ‘likability’ and not on the actual quality of the teacher and their teaching or professionalism.

The Importance of Recognition

Evaluating professionals for the jobs they do does not appear to be enough to spark intrinsic motivation anymore. Recognizing efforts, and jobs well done can motivate individuals to continue working well within their current job context. Johnson (1989) states “there is extensive evidence that teachers regard professional efficacy, not money, as the primary motivator in their work, and some evidence that the prospect of extrinsic rewards may diminish the potency of intrinsic rewards for them” (p. 55). If incentives are made obtainable employees work hard to achieve them (Johnson, 1989). The current systems offering recognition to teachers, in Alberta tend to encourage teachers to work towards receiving a certificate of teaching excellence. It encourages teachers to find someone who is willing to take on the job of nominating them. Ma
haraj (2013) states that “teachers are treated as undifferentiated, interchangeable parts, as opposed to professionals with unique skill sets” (p.20). Recognition is significant to all professions, including teachers, because it provides feedback, positive and constructive, to motivate employees to improve their overall effort.

Personal Reflection

Do I want to be evaluated every year? No, I think a yearly evaluation would be too hectic for teachers and administration. An annual evaluation would lead to teachers’ lessons being very prescribe, and possibly, should student outcomes be used in the evaluation process, teaching to the test would become the norm. However, an evaluation conducted every five years, like Ontario Education legislates, would be feasible for teachers and administrators. My rational for this process will be explained further in chapter three.

Would recognition be beneficial to me and my job process? Yes and no. Without any formal evaluation and limited recognition, I found my own recognition in the accomplishments of my students. I have my own intrinsic motivation that prompts me to keep developing experiences for my students. However, now as more and more teachers seek recognition, and receive it ‘just because’, I too would like a little bit of acknowledgement and small ‘thank you’ notes, sent my way.

I understand that some research shows student achievement levels increased because of the introduction of merit into school systems. Teachers teaching to the test and focusing directly on how they can get extra money, brought extreme focus onto the student’s ability to answer test questions correctly. However, little research has been conducted on whether or not teacher job satisfaction can also, in long terms, increase student achievement (Guis, 2013). I do not believe
that giving teachers bonuses motivates them to do better at their job. However, I believe that if teachers were subjected to the same evaluations they were when they first began their careers, they would continue to strive to improve their skills. The only evaluation for teacher’s ability cannot be based on student achievement, or who is recognized more by administration.

**Summary of Chapter 1**

This chapter introduced my interest in the idea of teacher evaluations and giving appropriate recognition. I believe teachers need more non-monetary incentives / recognition and the best way to provide this is by recognizing their strengths, watching them build on weaknesses, and not only seeing them excel in their job, but acknowledging it as well. In order to make teachers aware of their skill set, I believe that evaluations need to be conducted. Evaluations need to be equal and involve various individuals who are supportive and are impacted by the teacher.

Chapter 2 presents the literature that explains, supports, and critics the evaluation systems currently in education. Also, the use of monetary and non-monetary incentives as a means to increase teacher motivation, job satisfaction, and even student learning.

**Chapter 2 - Literature Review**

In education, teachers are compensated with salaries based on years of experience (Barr, 1949; Guis, 2013). Most districts pay teachers based on single salary grids (Dee & Keys, 2004). This grid uses years of experience combined with years of education to determine employee salaries (Barr, 1949; Guis, 2013). Salary grids have max out levels, where teachers, after so many years of service, and at the same level of education, make the same amount of salary (Guis, 2013; references), no matter what subjects, grade levels, coaching or the quality of the teaching.
(Guis, 2013). Since this particular grid is used in multiple school systems, very few teacher evaluations are conducted as teachers will make their way up the grid with each year of service (Guis, 2013).

Teacher evaluations are conducted on a regular basis in some school systems around the world (Stewart, 2010). Stewart (2010), states evaluations of teachers, or accountability markers are “controversial subject(s) in many countries” (p.19). In most school districts, where evaluations are policy, teachers are rewarded with bonuses, both in monetary and non-monetary forms (Stewart, 2010). These forms of merit have been rejected by some school systems, in particular Canada and Finland, because there is a lack of evidence supporting the benefits of merit on the improvement of teacher performance, and student achievement levels (Stewart, 2010).

Merit, performance related pay (PRP) (Belfield & Heywood, 2008; Cutler & Waine, 1999), and bonuses are forms of payment given above an employee’s set salary (Viadero, 2009). Merit, within the teaching profession, can be found in school districts throughout the United States (Fryer, 2013; Pipho, 1983; Williams & Engel, 2012) and various parts of the world, including Chili (Contreras & Rau, 2012), India, Finland, and Japan (Williams & Engel, 2012). Researchers have studied various PRP and incentive programs that use evaluations to rate teacher’s professional performance, and student achievement level (Lavy, 2002; Viadero, 2009). As well, a comparison of student achievement levels is used to determine teacher effectiveness (Jones, 2013). Many studies have concluded that the implementation of performance merit can be beneficial for motivating teachers (Ballou & Podgursky, 1993; Murnane & Cohen, 1986). However, many studies have concluded that PRP incentives have many drawbacks and ultimately merit pay is detrimental to the cooperative nature of teachers (Dee & Keys, 2004; Guis, 2013; Oliver,
1981), and schools (Cutler & Waine, 1999). The systems observed, put unneeded pressure on teachers to compete with one another (Poulos, Culberston, Piazza, D’Entremont, 2013), and only improves job satisfaction for the particular teachers who receive it (Guis, 2013). Stewart (2010), states districts that have rejected merit, as a form of evaluation or reward from an evaluation, focus more of encouraging communication about student achievement and continued progress. The limited case studies show that teachers are motivated more when they are evaluated fairly for their work conducted in the classroom and around the school (Andrews, 2011).

The intent of this literature review is to take an in-depth look at teacher evaluations. Are they truly beneficial in determining who the excellent teachers are? And, can an evaluation effectively encourage teachers to improve their teaching practices? I will define the term evaluation and how it relates to the teaching profession. As well, I will define and explore various types of evaluations teachers are presented with. Plus, include the process of evaluation and the benefits and drawbacks of the methods and outcomes. Also, comparative case studies of teacher evaluation and incentive systems will be reviewed. Finally, I will conclude that evaluations and non-monetary recognition systems can help teachers develop intrinsic motivation, therefore improving student academics, and overall teacher job satisfaction.

**Defining Evaluation and Recognition.**

Evaluation is defined as a way of assessing a performance against set standards and objectives (Boyle, Lemaire & Rist, 1999). In some evaluation systems merit pay, bonuses and performance related pay (PRP), is defined as cash payment given or withheld, to or from an employee based on assessments of performance (Culter & Waine, 1999; Viadero, 2009). In particular, businesses provided their employees with bonuses for bringing in additional revenue for
companies, and/or the company motivates their employees by providing a percentage of the yearly profit margin (Viadero, 2009). In the educational field, teachers are unable to bring in additional revenue, as schools are not in the business of making money. Therefore, rewarding bonuses is determined by other means. A “financial incentive in the form of a cash bonus” (Jones, 2013, p.148) given to teachers, when students demonstrate an increase or excellence in achievement (Dee & Keys, 2004; Jones, 2013), is defined as educational merit. It is important to note that PRP is rewarded through an evaluation process and does not consider regular annual salary increments and that yearly pay increases are not based on actual teacher performance (Culter & Waine, 1999). Currently, school systems using PRP schemes, tend to focus on student test scores because tests are viewed as hard to manipulate and easy to compare (Johnson, 1984). According to Johnson (1984), graduation rates and student grades are not concrete enough to use in evaluating teacher performance because they can be altered by making graduation requirements more lenient or classes less demanding.

The definition of merit differs from the definition of recognition. Recognition may include merit pay, as it is awarded to a teacher in recognition of the work they have achieved. However, for the purposes of this literature review, recognition is defined as non-cash incentives awarded or presented to individuals in acknowledgement of their efforts in a particular field (Andrews, 2011). Particularly, in the field of education, recognition can be awarded to teachers in multiple forms which include, but are not limited to, professional development opportunities, days off in lieu, classroom funds, school or district awards and even thank you cards (Andrews, 2011). Providing various types of recognition helps teachers achieve goals and improve on evaluations.
Overall, the proposed purpose of evaluation, merit and recognition, for teachers is to “better teaching staff, better instruction and better schools” (Johnson, 1984, p. 182).

**History of Evaluation**

Teachers are not strangers to evaluation (Barr, 1949). Preservice teachers are evaluated on all aspects of teaching and their capacity to teach set curriculum, maintain the standards of a classroom, and institution (Barr, 1949; Poulos, Culberston, Piazza & D’Entremont, 2014). Once teachers receive a permanent job, the concept of performance evaluations becomes a long standing controversy amongst teachers and school systems (Stewart, 2010). Superintendents of school districts used to hold the sole responsibility of evaluating teachers and the institutions they worked in (Sullivan, 2012). This could be done because school systems were much smaller than present day and superintendents had time to make periodic visits (Sullivan, 2012). Sullivan (2012), studied the Montgomery County teacher evaluation history, and found with a large influx of teachers hired to accommodate growing schools, principals were given the responsibility of evaluating teachers. There was a shift in teacher’s views of the evaluation process, as employees began to feel the administrator’s evaluation process to be more of “personal attack” then helpful in developing their teaching abilities (Salek, 1975. p. 34; Sullivan, 2012). McGreal (1982) states the perceived intent of teacher accountability systems has been to “obtain documentation of inappropriate teacher behaviour” (p.303). Teachers paradigms about evaluations need to shift to recognize evaluations are “built around the concept of improving instruction” (McGreal, 1982. p. 303).

Merit pay was not introduced into education as a reward for evaluations. Rather, merit first became a discussion topic around the end of the 1940’s (Barr, 1949; Gragg, 1960; Gius,
2013; Hamner, 1975; Johnson, 1984; Jones, 2013). It was proposed to the teaching profession as a way to provide incentives to attract individuals towards teaching as a career, and to motivate current teachers to stay in teaching with the hopes that these teachers would pursue excellence within their own profession (Barber & Klein, 1983; Pipho, 1983). This incentive was soon faded out as the profession became sought after and employment increased (Pipho, 1983). In the 1960’s merit pay for teachers was again proposed to the field of education on the belief that students who acquired skills, knowledge and attributes would have a more effective understanding when they were taught by good teachers (Gragg, 1960). Gragg (1960) points out that this implementation of merit pay was designed to reveal the good teachers. Once again, this type of recognition for excellence in teaching, faded out. According to Guis (2013), the implementation of The No Child Left Behind Act (2001), prompted an increase of pressure on school districts to produce better teachers, and on teachers to “perform better in the classroom” (Guis, 2013, p. 4450). The systems of merit pay for teachers was proposed again and introduced into some educational systems throughout the United States (Dee & Keys, 2004; Guis, 2013). The outcome was intended to motivate educators to increase student achievement (Gragg, 1960; Guis, 2013; Johnson, 1984; Jones, 2013; Lavy, 2002; Williams & Engel, 2012). The United States government even provided funding for teacher merit, forcing school boards would have to evaluate and reward teachers (Williams & Engel, 2013). The easiest way to assess many groups of teachers, to give incentives accordingly, and quickly, left evaluations to be based on student achievement levels. (Gragg 1960; Williams & Engel, 2013). The process was also used to ‘weed out’ teachers that performed poorly (Johnson 1984). By weeding out the lower performing teachers, it is believed that schools would be equipped with educators, that excelled in their fields and in turn,
students will excel at their schooling (Johnson, 1984). Evaluation for merit can still be found in particular districts in order to draw teachers towards particular programs and school communities, which may not typically be first choice teaching assignments for most teachers (Maharaj, 2014).

Andrews (2011) states that there are only 50% of schools, K-12, that offer or provide non-monetary recognition to teachers. He stated that “school administrators, teacher unions, and governing boards have neglected to realize the importance of recognition as a motivator for their teachers” (Andrews, 2011. p.60).

Types of Evaluations

Before teachers can receive merit or recognition of any form, evaluations are conducted to determine if they have proven to have excelled within their positions. There are various avenues teachers can be evaluated on, and ways data can be collected to determine if a teacher meets the expectations of receiving merit pay. Awarding merit to teachers ultimately requires a form of evaluation to ensure merit or recognition is being given appropriately (Barber & Klein, 1983). Evaluations, properly conducted, can provide crucial feedback to teachers (Andrews, 2011). Some of the evaluation processes and forms of collecting data have value in the work teachers do (Williams & Engel, 2013). Other evaluations tend to miss the “extra’s” teachers put into their job (Guis, 2013). However, most merit evaluations done for teachers focus solely on the achievement levels of students (Barber & Klein, 1983; Jones, 2013; Poulos, Culberston, Piazza & D’Entremont, 2014; Williams & Engel, 2013). This type of assessment of teacher ability does not necessarily claim one teacher excels more than another. While studying merit systems around the world, Williams and Engel (2013) found forms of evaluations for “accountability and
instructional improvement” (Williams & Engel, p.53). These forms of evaluation are “organized differently depending on the model of accountability” (p.53). Professional accountability, organizational accountability, market accountability are the main focuses determined by Williams and Engel (2013) as areas of assessment to determine merit or recognition for educators.

**Professional Accountability**

Professional accountability (Williams & Engel, 2013) evaluates teachers based on their focus of professional protocol and the multiple qualities that make up the profession of teaching (Barber & Klein, 1983; Barr, 1949; Williams & Engel, 2013; Gius, 2013). Williams and Engel (2013), discovered that this form of evaluation is the bases for teacher evaluations to reward merit in Finland and Japan. Educators are accountable to each other to maintain a high standard of professionalism (Williams & Engel, 2013). Evaluations of teachers, to determine if they have been maintaining exemplary standards of professionalism, involve creating professional learning communities (PLC’s), and conducting group and peer reflections where feedback is given from colleagues (Barber & Klein, 1983; Williams & Engel, 2013). By creating this atmosphere the evaluations are “consultative and formative” (Williams & Engel, 2013, p. 54). These type of formative systems evaluate to “obtain feedback” (Barber & Klein, 1983, p. 248) in order to improve the quality of teaching. Williams and Engel (2013) found that cooperation grows as administration recognizes staff’s areas of strengths and weaknesses based on their own past experiences, and “lead the professional activities of teachers rather than command and control” (p. 54) them. This type of evaluation encourages cooperation amongst staff, for all students, and the school community, and eliminates the pressures of staff to compete with one another.
Organizational Accountability

Organizational accountability can be found in most school systems around the world (Williams & Engel, 2013). Similar to professional accountability, organization accountability involves set norms, but includes the structures and incentives “of the formal institution” (Williams & Engel, 2013. p. 54). This means the school or board has a set of standards in addition to the professional codes set by state governments and / or teacher unions, on which they hold their teachers accountable. The evaluations of teachers within organization accountability systems is usually mandated. However, Williams and Engel (2013) state that Mexico provides their teachers with a voluntary option of being evaluated for PRP. When teachers were provided the option for evaluation, the outcomes were positive, showing a strong relationship amongst school and the higher a teacher scored the higher the students achieved (Williams & Engel, 2013). In mandatory districts, the process of rotating evaluations are used often. These particular rating schedules would have groups of teachers, within a division or school, evaluated every three years (Barber & Klein, 1983). The rotating perspective allows the inclusion of all teachers and gives them a period of relief between evaluations. Since organizational accountability takes place within the formal institution, administration “must use evaluation as a tool to judge the net worth of a teacher’s performance” (Barber & Klein, 1983 p. 248.).

Market Accountability

Market accountability focuses on how a particular school board or single school is able to market themselves to the public (Williams & Engel, 2013). The purpose for school staffs being evaluated under this type of accountability shows students, parents and stakeholders the particular school or system has high success rates, including exemplary test schools and high graduation
rates (Williams & Engel, 2013). The particular evaluations conducted in market accountability systems tend to generalize and focus on one particular variable (Jones, 2013). One dimensional evaluation formats do not include the multiple aspects and characteristics of the teaching profession. The job of a teacher is multidimensional and involves more than teaching students to produce high test scores. Although, evaluations in all areas of teaching are equally as important within the field, to parents and stakeholders, student achievement is the utmost priority. Williams and Engel (2013) discovered teachers under a market accountability system in Japan would conduct classes outside of the schools to provide students with extra teachings about government given exams. This chosen best practice of the teacher is to ensure that the students score highly, in turn the teachers score highly earning PRP (Belfield & Heywood, 2008; Cutler & Waine, 1999). The observations of student learning and achievement in some merit systems is completed with a comparison of previous test scores from year to year (Jones, 2013). In other merit paying districts, student levels are recorded at the beginning of year and compared to the year end results (Jones, 2013). Thus proving an increase in achievement and awarding the teacher with the performance related pay (Jones, 2013). In various studies, completed on single evaluation systems used in the United States (Fryer, 2013; Pipho, 1983; Williams & Engel, 2012), researchers discovered that teachers focus heavily on student achievement and teach to the test (Williams & Engel, 2012). Williams and Engel (2012) also state that the market accountability system is used throughout Singapore. Teachers are evaluated yearly on performance which are compared with “specific targets” (Williams & Engel, 2013). Market accountability also assess a teacher’s longevity and particular needs for professional development (Williams & Engel, 2013). It was discovered that this particular evaluation model provided constructive
feedback for teachers, which included second chances, resulting in a rarity that a teacher was let go from their job (Williams & Engel, 2013).

In all accountability systems evaluations are conducted by school or district administration, and possibly outside forces where the “evaluators carefully monitor teachers’ performance, and teachers are helped to learn skills that will align their performance with district standards” (Barber & Klein, 1983 p. 248). When conducting the evaluations it is important to utilize multiple methods and instruments gathered from the various viewpoints from more than one observer (Barber & Klein, 1983; Barr, 1949; Gius, 2013). These accountability systems use multiple approaches, methods and instruments to gather data from various viewpoints. The data collected helps provide teachers with well-rounded feedback to improve, and build on in various aspects of their jobs (Barber & Klein, 1983; Barr, 1949; Gius, 2013). Teachers need to be evaluated based on their qualities, their performance, personality, and student growth (Barr, 1949). Gragg (1960) points out that if “differences in teaching qualities exist, they can be recognized by people who ought to know the meaning of good teaching, and who know (good teaching) when they see it”. (p. 408). “If evaluations are made in terms of the mental controls or prerequisites of success, one must list, define, and measure these controls in some adequate manner.” (Barr, 1949. p. 6). Unfortunately, the definitions differ from school district and merit systems. As well, the tools used for evaluation tend to be subjective (Barber & Klein, 1983) and inadequate (Barber & Klein, 1983; Barr, 1949). It is important to have instrumentation that supports merit systems in every school system and fosters teachers’ growth and effectiveness (Gragg, 1960).
**Classroom Walkthroughs**

The purpose of classroom walkthroughs is to improve current teaching and the learning of students as well as teachers (David, 2008; Westcott, 2010). Walkthroughs, defined by Kachur, Stout, Edwards and Larchmont, through Westcott (2010), are observations of classrooms, the teachers, and the students, by various educational stakeholders. These observations are intended to be rapid and casual (David, 2008; Westcott, 2010). The theory of walkthroughs is to advocate for principals and teachers to work cooperatively in order to strengthen the classroom teachings (David, 2008; Westcott, 2010). Westcott (2010), states that although teachers believed the process did improve their personal motivation, the theories overall objective is “not intended to evaluate the classroom teacher, but rather act as a practical strategy for improving instruction and curriculum, leading to improved student achievement” (p. 455). To implement the walkthrough process a formal training called “The Learning Walk” (Westcott, 2010) is suggested. However, informal training is allowed in the form of small learning communities amongst participants to reviews and discuss (Westcott, 2010). Participants of walkthroughs, should include principals, superintendents, fellow teachers, community members and even students (David, 2008; Westcott, 2010). Involving all stakeholders provides the opportunity for all to improve in the classroom. Overall, the walkthrough is only a small portion of an evaluation used in order to asses teachers, their teaching, and students learning. Westcott (2012), states the results of walkthroughs left principals seeing an opportunity to enhance classroom. The results show “data on instructional effectiveness, to provide feedback to the school” (p. 454). This helped develop the school culture, nurtured teacher, and staff reflection and identified future “professional development needs” (Westcott, 2010. p. 454).
Non-monetary Incentives

Stated previously, since it is given as a reward for excelling in an assigned position, recognition in the job field can also include merit and PRP. However, for the purposes of this paper, recognition is a non-monetary incentives that provides school districts an alternative to monetary awards (Andreas, 2011; Maharaj, 2014). Andrews (2011) states that there is a lack of true recognition for teachers in education. School districts use non-monetary incentive programs to motivate teachers to excel in their classrooms and job performance (Andreas, 2011). Various PRP programs around the world give merit pay as a ‘quick and easy’ way to motivate teachers (Ballou & Podgursky, 1993) and improve student achievement levels (Lavy, 2002). However, some incentive programs provide teachers various incentives of non-monetary forms (Andrews, 2011; Maharaj, 2014). Studies have shown that although these non-pay related incentives do not necessarily show an increase in student achievement levels (Maharaj, 2014), there is an increase in teacher morale, staff collaboration, and school culture (Andrews, 2011).

Maharaj (2014), discusses the motivation “career ladders” create for teachers in the workplace. Career ladders are the development of differing levels that involve an increase of job or professional responsibilities (Maharaj, 2014). New responsibilities could include “enhanced learning opportunities and remedial assistance to students, mentoring other teachers, taking academic classes, attending workshops or participating in professional organizations” (Maharaj, 2014. p. 17). Being awarded a progression on the career ladder would exemplify that a teacher’s ability and performance has been recognized (Maharaj, 2014). Maharaj (2014), states that Dowling, Murphy and Wang (2007) found significant improvement in student achievement throughout districts in Arizona that use career ladders. He also states that Booker and Glazeman (2009b) did
not see an overwhelming increase in achievement, but were able to conclude there was an improvement for recruiting and retaining teachers within the teaching field (Maharaj, 2014). Implementing career ladders “enable teachers to meaningfully progress in their careers while staying in the classroom” (Maharaj, 2014 p. 17). In many districts teachers are only able to be promoted to the position of school administrators. Maharaj (2014) points out that teaching and administrative skills differ and teachers who take these promotions tend not to return to the classroom. He points out that this is unfortunate as the only way excellent teachers are recognized and rewarded is by taking them out of the classroom, where they are needed (Maharaj, 2014).

To keep excellent teachers in the classroom and to create more excellent teachers administrators, boards and governments need to develop non-merit paying systems to recognize exemplary teachers (Andrews, 2011; Maharaj, 2014). In surveys, teachers state that merit pay does not motivate them to motivate students to learn more (Maharaj, 2014). Rather, the creation of ‘Excellence In Teaching’ or district recognition awards has shown to improve employee satisfaction and cooperative support from fellow teachers (Andrews, 2011; Maharaj, 2014). While providing non-monetary recognition such as additional preparation time or smaller classes, has not shown a steady increase in student achievement, Andrews (2011) states they are key factors of the working environments and can motivate teachers just the same as money, if not more.

**Rationale for Teacher Evaluations**

Teacher evaluations have shown to have some positive and negative effects on teachers, teaching and school communities. The implementation of evaluations has impacted multiple areas of the teaching profession. Researchers have discovered that effects are made on teachers self-esteem (Bodary, 2008; Hamner, 1975; ), motivation (Hamner, 1975; ), collaboration (Barber
& Klein, 1983; Belfield & Heywood, 2008; Bodary, 2008; Jones, 2013), overall job satisfaction (Guis, 2013; Hamner, 1975; Jones, 2013; ), performance (Belfield & Heywood, 2008; Jones, 2013; ), and work ethics (Bodary, 2008).

The focus of an evaluation and incentive programs is to improve teacher behaviours, which would affect student achievement positively (Jones, 2013), and it was discovered, by many researchers, that teachers who received merit rewards had high student achievement levels (Jones, 2013). High levels of job satisfaction show better output from employees (Belfield & Heywood, 2008; Guis, 2013; Jones 2013). When merit is given to teachers it is showing them that their work is appreciated and their hard work is recognized through the evaluations done (Jones, 2013). Guis (2013) found that teachers who received merit pay had a higher rate of job satisfaction than those that did not receive any compensation. However, Guis’s (2013) study was conducted by comparing teachers within a school district that offers merit pay and teachers within a system that does not offer merit pay. His results were not determined by comparing teachers within the same merit paying system. Guis (2013), also notes that teacher participants of a study done by Heywood and Wei (2006), showed a higher level of job and worker satisfaction, where collaborative efforts between teachers and administration increased (Guis, 2013).

Merit pay hoped to encourage teachers to continuously work on professional growth within their job (Barber & Klein, 1983; Belfield & Heywood, 2008; Bodary, 2008; Gragg, 1960; Guis, 2013; Jones, 2013). This would help with increased guidance for teachers (Gragg, 1960), possibly even show teachers that they are supported and their job performance is recognized.
Challenges to Implementing Evaluations

Merit is designed more for occupations that have a more streamline business model (Barber & Klein, 1983; Viadero, 2009). Although many businesses and companies show an increase in job satisfaction and productivity amongst staff, when offering merit, PRP, and bonuses to employees (Viadero, 2009), the introduction of these systems into a profession, that functions mainly on cooperative efforts by all staff members, diminishes the culture and collaborative atmosphere (Guis, 2013). The loss of collaboration, declining staff morale, the evaluation processes, and the evaluations themselves, top off the list of drawbacks researchers have found in educational merits paying districts.

Teaching is a profession that is widely viewed as cooperative (Poulos, Culberston, Piazza, D’Entremont, 2013). Heywood and Wei (2006) concluded that by rewarding a teacher above another teacher, for better job performance, has shown a decrease in worker satisfaction with coworkers. Although, teachers, who have been recipients of merit and rewards, have enjoyed the acknowledgment, their unawarded peers have admitted to feelings of animosity and jealousy (Barber & Klein, 1983).

According to Guis (2013) very little research has been done on the impact that merit pay has on job satisfaction and even less support that it raises morale. However, he determined that not only does merit pay reduce cooperation, but it “creates an incentive to squelch creativity and critical thought, replacing it with rote memorization and lessons on test-taking skills.” (Guis, 2013, p. 4450). Research found that when teachers expressed their dislike of a merit pay systems, offered in their profession, it was because those teachers “believe that they are being unfairly demonized in the process since the influences of other agents in the educational process (parent,
students and other teachers) are routinely ignored, and all the blame for failure rests squarely on
the shoulders of the teacher” (Guis, 2013. p. 4450). Teachers take the brunt of student failures
and can and will be blamed for a lack of student and parents drive and effort to be personally
successful (Guis, 2013). Teachers felt that they were evaluated strongly by parents because they
simply did not like them and were therefore not rewarded PRP (Guis, 2013).

The evaluating systems for merit are not designed to fully evaluate the entire workload of
a teacher. Teaching the curriculum and having students achieve high test scores are not the full
extent of the teaching profession. Evaluation systems are designed to rate teachers (Barr, 1949),
however, if the scales are not well constructed and if the individuals conducting the evaluations
are untrained, morale and teacher efficiency will be damaged (Barr, 1949). Evaluations conduct-
ed by administrators showed teachers have felt reprimand when the administrator and the teacher
did not have a positive or trustworthy relationship (Barr, 1949). According to Gragg (1960), if
teachers and administration are able to work cooperatively within the evaluation process, better
teaching will ensue. However, because an individual is in the role of administration there is an
assumption that they are capable and qualified to conduct evaluations on teacher’s performance
(Maharaj, 2013). Yet, school administrators receive little to no training on how to evaluate and
motivate their teachers (Maharaj, 2013). Maharaj (2014), discovered that although there are
many theories for teacher evaluations, the evaluations currently used do not differentiate perfor-
mance. The outcome of most evaluations results in a score of “satisfactory” or “unsatisfactory”,
providing very little constructive feedback to motivate teachers to strive for excellence in their
job (Maharaj, 2014).
Recognition Systems

The use of recognition to develop a school culture and community, has shown higher staff morale and teacher performance (Wentworth, 1990). Building job satisfaction through recognition of jobs well done or student achievement, inspire teachers to maintain and / or improve their efforts within the classroom in order to continue gaining recognition (Wentworth, 1990). Cronin and Becherer (1999) state that Graham and Unruh (1990) conducted a case study to see the impact of non-monetary incentives on staff morale and job satisfaction with nurses. They discovered that nurses showed an increase in motivation when they were recognized by their managers regarding their job performance (Cronin & Becherer, 1999). The types of recognition used included, “verbal praise, personal notes, and morale-building meetings to celebrate successes” (Cronin & Becherer, 1999. p. 5). They also note that these techniques, which have clear motivational impact, typically are practiced the least, even though they are easier and less expensive to use than organization-initiated or presence-based (i.e., contingent on organizational membership alone, rather than on performance) systems (Cronin & Becherer, 1999).

Conclusion

Awarding teachers on their teaching abilities and overall excellence within the educational profession has its place in recognizing teachers for the work that they do. With the addition of merit pay, teachers may even be motivated to improve their teaching methods and alter their pedagogy to receive additional pay as recognition. However, the evaluation of teachers has yet to be ironed out in order to properly evaluate the jobs teachers do on a daily basis. Schools encourage collaborative efforts and merit pay does the exact opposite of motivating any type of cooperative work amongst staff members.
Teachers have no control over which students are put in their classrooms year after year, or the learning abilities of each of those students. “The quality and consistency of the raw materials of teachers’ work - the children whom they teach - are beyond their control. Teachers are expected to do the best with what they are given; discards are not permitted” (Johnson, 1984 p. 182).

It has be determined that teachers need feedback on how they are doing so they can see “the function of evaluation as developmental or formative” (Barber & Klein, 1983 p. 248). However, when both formative and summative assessments are used teachers receive inconsistent messages “about the purposes and outcomes of the evaluation” (Barber & Klein, 1983 p. 248). For merit system evaluations to be successful there has to be full acceptance and cooperation from classroom teachers, administration and the school community (Gragg, 1960). Teachers want evaluations that are valid, reliable, fair, and understanding of their profession (Barr, 1949). Although the evaluation process of merit pay has strengths in providing reasons why and which teachers should receive such recognition, the weakness of the processes used show that student achievement becomes the ‘fallback’ method of which to determine worth of merit. Merit, as it has been used in the past and is currently being used does not work to improve the teaching profession. Teachers deserve valid and reliable evaluation systems to help build team work, job satisfaction and intrinsic motivation.
Chapter 3 - Developing an Effective Teacher Evaluation

“It's amazing how much you can get done if you don't worry about who gets the credit.”

-Dallin H. Oaks

Chapter 2 covers the literature that explains, and shows that monetary forms of merit are not a valid form of evaluating or improving teachers, their teaching or job satisfaction. Literature shows that employees, in various professional fields, appreciate having their hard work recognized in some way shape or form by human resources, administrations and other employee supervisory positions. Case studies show when employers, or companies recognize their employees efforts, job satisfaction increases, as does employee efforts towards improving their own work, and the function of the overall company (Barber & Klein, 1983; Cutler & Waine, 1999). One significant drawback about an unstructured recognition program is some employees may not receive very little or no recognition. Whereas, other employees may receive multiple forms in a variety of ways. This can happen because some personalities standout more than others on a staff and/or sometimes, obvious recognition given can be viewed as like-ability or favouritism amongst staff members. Unfortunately, this creates a non-cooperative atmosphere and does not motivate employees to excel further in their job.

Discussed in the previous chapters is the lack of recognition given within schools, to staff, by administration. In some educational systems teachers are awarded monetary forms of merit when their students produce high test scores (Jones, 2013). These scores are used to declare a teacher “excellent” and merit is given. Student ability is not the proper way to assess the skills of teachers. Barr (1949) points out that teachers are evaluated throughout their studies pri
or to entering the profession and when then begin the profession. He states “what teachers want is fair, valid, and reliable evaluation(s)” (Barr, 1949. p. 6). Teachers need evaluations to keep them current in their work, and to push them to keep striving (Barber & Klein, 1983; Barr, 1949).

This chapter will focus on the development of an evaluation process with a focus on the usability to be in an elementary school setting. The evaluations are meant to be used by the classroom teacher, parents, students and school administrators to effectively evaluate teachers. The idea of evaluating teachers is not to “weed out” the good from the bad. The intent is to provide teachers with feedback on areas of strength and areas of weakness. The rationale for this system is explained further, as is the development for the evaluations, the process, the execution and desired outcomes.

**Rationale**

Since receiving my permanent teaching certificate and teaching contract with my current board, I have not been evaluated. I recall the events of preparing for scheduled evaluations and maintaining my lesson plans and units for the “surprise” evaluations. All of which are required before a recommendation for permanent certification can be given and accepted. I can recall the motivation of wanting to do well. To prove that I was worthy of obtaining and maintaining a teaching job. However, the only time I have witnessed or heard of teachers being evaluated is at their own request or because an administrator has decided to evaluate a particular teacher. Evaluations used to be viewed as a good thing. It was the process that provided teachers feedback about their strengths and their weaknesses. It would show the areas that would need some attention in order to develop and maintain well rounded lessons and classroom management. When an evaluation is done at the request of an administrator, teachers can sometimes begin to view
this as a negative process to disprove a claim, either made for a parent or possibly because a principal does not particularly like the individual teacher. Often reasons are not share or disclosed. However, after years of not being under evaluation, to suddenly find oneself in a situation of being evaluated can become nerve wracking and upsetting. If the purpose of evaluations stayed the same as they are for preservice and beginning teachers, the process would be expected and understood as a means to improve the teaching profession.

Ontario is currently the only province within Canada that maintains a standard for mandatory teacher evaluations. In his study on Ontario’s evaluation model, Maharaj (2014) found that many teachers were not in favour of the current evaluation system used in Ontario. His results shows that teachers felt the evaluations did not successfully assess their abilities and practice (Maharaj, 2014). Furthermore, the evaluation process did not improve teacher practice or motivate teachers to expand their learning and teaching (Maharaj, 2014). I believe various types of evaluations are important because it helps build intrinsic motivation to continue to excel in teaching. It gives teachers an opportunity to see their strengths and to use them to build on their weaknesses. It also puts administration in the position where they get to know their teachers strengths and can see areas of growth. As well, it prompts administration to compliment and recognize teachers they perhaps normally do not have a strong connection with. Recognition has become lost in the daily routines and schools are more focused on praising the students for successes and blame teachers for failures.

The Walkthrough program intends for stakeholders to visit classroom quickly just to observe how the students and teachers are improving (David 2008; Westcott, 2010). The understanding of the walkthroughs is that teachers will have prior notice, that it can involve principals,
TEACHER EVALUATIONS

colleagues, parents, and even students. Once the walkthrough is completed the expectation is that the teacher will be given feedback on what was observed in their classroom (David, 2008). The drawback to a walkthrough is that it has evolved into quick evaluations for principals and little to no feedback is given (David, 2008).

Having a set format for formal evaluations helps keep teachers focused on not only student improvement but personal improvement. I feel that having evaluations is important because it can help build more intrinsic motivation and promote teachers to excel within the teaching profession. A system of evaluation, although I fear it would not be welcomed by the majority of teachers, would indicate to myself, and my administration that I am good at my profession.

Developing an Evaluation

Developing evaluations, that provide effective feedback, to teachers about their profession has been created and recreated multiple times. Haefele (1993) states that the development of evaluations for teachers must “emerge from a clear statement of purpose” (p. 21). The definitive purpose for evaluations “guides the development and refinement of the evaluation system” (Haefele, 1993, p. 21). Determining if an evaluation is going to be formative or summative is key to determining its effectiveness (Haefele, 1993). For the purpose of this project, formative assessments will be developed to help build intrinsic motivation of teachers.

Considerations of developing evaluations include, who is being evaluated, and who will be doing the evaluations, as well as, how the results will be managed (Boyle, Lemaire & Rist, 1999). The development of the following evaluations are intended to be used at an elementary school level, in order to not only build teacher effectiveness and accountability, but to help build a more effective school culture. As an assessment tool, I have chosen to use Google Forums to
develop questionnaires for teachers, parents, students and administrators. All stakeholders would have input, and the results would be discussed between the individual teacher and principal, prompting positive communication between the two. Using Google Forums allows the evaluation to be accessed from anywhere. Also, Google Forums provides a way for the results to be managed, as the online program collects and graphs all results received from each group of evaluators. These results can then be used to assess/review teacher’s professional growth plans at the end of each school year.

**Self-Evaluations**

Being able to self-evaluate yourself is important. It provides individuals with the ability to state their strengths, their interests and areas of needed attention or growth. A standard personal assessment (Appendix A), allows teachers to self-evaluate themselves each school year. The best time for these evaluations to be conducted would be towards the end of the school year, although using evaluation midpoints throughout the year, may prove beneficial for the teachers to stay on track with their professional goals. The questions are not hidden from teachers, because it is important for individuals to know what areas within the job, the questions and evaluations focus on. Questions focus on professionalism, planning, teaching, classroom management and overall satisfaction.

**Parent and Student Evaluations**

The individuals we plan for every day are the students. We teach them how to develop their own voice through writing and speaking every day in our lessons. Including them in the evaluation process gives them a voice to explain how they felt as a student in a teacher’s classroom, for a ten month period. Students at various grade levels would be given a small question
naire allowing them to give feedback to their teacher. Granted students, no matter what grade level, may show a general dislike for a teacher, in which case some evaluations need to be considered as supplementary input and the comments provided by students would have to be considered, as well as looked over for specific examples the students could provide. Students are provided various questions pertaining to their experiences over ten months. Areas would include lessons, safety, comfortably, teacher approachability, and knowledge gained. Providing a questionnaire of multiple choice questions, mostly focusing on yes or no answers would suffice for lower grades, particularly grades K-2. Students from 3-6 would be provided with a questionnaire involving multiple choice questions and allowing for comments. This template, if developed, would continue into the junior and high school grades as well. The grades K-2 and 3-6 student evaluations (Appendix B), would also be provided in a Google Forum set up.

Parents of student would also be sent an evaluation each year. Parents are an important stakeholder and want to have input into their children’s education and their experience their child has while in school. The parent assessment (Appendix C) focuses on their involvement in the classroom, teacher communication and overall satisfaction of their child’s learning experience from year to year.

**Administrative Evaluation**

Ballou and Podgursky (1993) found that a common feeling amongst teachers was that administrators were unable to evaluate teachers fairly. However, if principals are aware of the areas that teachers want to work on, as well as how their teaching helps develop the school culture, then I feel they would have a base understanding in how to effectively evaluate a specific teacher and develop a cooperative working relationship. The intent of teacher evaluations are to
further improve the teacher, their instruction, and help administration provide recognition to their staff for their efforts. Evaluations done by administration should not focus on what they perceive is negative about the teacher, their classroom or their teaching.

Administrative reviews (Appendix C), do not need to be conducted every year. Staggering individual staff members over a three year pattern gives time in-between evaluations for teachers to effectively build on areas that are suggested for improvement. School administration already review teacher professional growth plan on an annual basis, therefore keeping them informed of the teachers chosen development.

Perceived Challenges

Whenever an evaluation is mentioned, tension seems to rise. It is difficult for individuals, in any job to see evaluations as a positive effect. Yet, when preservice teachers began their journey into teaching, evaluations were perceived as beneficial and built intrinsic motivation to achieve high results, to learn new processes and develop greater understanding of the concepts that student need to learn throughout the school year. There were clear expectations provided for what is needed to graduate with an education degree. When teachers are hired with school boards, they again go through a system of evaluations in the process to obtain a permanent contract. It is after obtaining this that teachers are never evaluated again. Evaluation, after receiving a permanent contract are instantly viewed as a negative process and tension can build between teachers and administrators. As well as teachers and their colleagues. Setting standards for all, keep the evaluation fair and productive.
**Desired Results**

The desired outcome from consistent and stable teacher evaluations would be to provide a stepping stone for teacher usage in order to build teaching methods and practices. Having evaluations in place, allows for individuals to see where their interest, strengths and weakness appear. Having greater understanding of personal skill sets helps improve teaching, and teacher administrator collaboration and communication.

**Conclusion**

Developing an effective way for teachers to evaluate themselves and be evaluated by others, provides the much needed feedback for job improvement. When all teachers are evaluated in the same way, under the same standards job, satisfaction increases. The process of using the Google Forum allows the process of evaluation to be quick and easy. As well, the results are stored year after, allowing a collection of data and evidence to show improvement.

“*A person who feels appreciated will always do more than what is expected.*”

- PureHappyLife.com

**Chapter 4 - Personal Reflection**

**Summary**

The previous chapters focus on my background knowledge, and experience, with regards to teacher assessment and acknowledgement. I discuss how this topic was developed and why it is important to me. Chapter two emphasizes the literature studied, and presently available on why teacher assessments are important, and why providing recognition to practitioners, in the educational field, has positive effects on job satisfaction, job performance and student outcomes. In chapter three, I present forms of evaluations for teachers to personally assess their teaching
abilities. Additional assessments/surveys, usable by students, parents, and administration, are provided in order to see the ability and continuous professional development of teachers, without bias. This final chapter focuses on my personal journey, and provides an autoethnographical account of my individual MEd process. I have chosen two focus areas of growth and learning, as well, provide recommendations to educators, who may find interest in exploring my project further.

**Changed and Reinforced Professional Thinking**

I can still recall the first day of this MEd program. I left wanting to quit. I did not understand the terminology being used and panic set in. It had been years since I had written a paper, and had absolutely no idea what a précis was. I was overwhelmed by the amount of articles assigned. I knew absolutely nothing about the new Alberta competencies, that were being discussed in the curriculum course, as these developing shifts had not been a focus in my current board, yet. Everyone around me seemed to be so confident and knowledgeable. I did not even know what the word “pedagogy” meant. I convinced myself, I was well in over my head and quite possibly an unknowledgeable teacher. However, after some friendly advice and words of encouragement, I showed up the second day and never looked back. Throughout this process, I learned pedagogy is my own teaching methods, my understandings, and beliefs. After reading various scholars, and networking with colleagues, in the program, my pedagogy was revised, re-sculpted and validated in many ways.

Through learning about curriculum development, and exploring the evolvement of a competency based curriculum, my perspective on education and the profession was changed. Beginning with and learning about the new provincial competencies was a process for me.
Knowing curriculum was currently being reviewed and undergoing a large adjustment, I found myself unsure of the new competency focuses, and wondering how I was going to implement these into my best practices. I learned that the best part about being a teacher, who is working on their MEd, is you have the environment to try out new ideas, theories, and curriculum, at your fingertips. The implementation of the seven shifts, from Alberta Learning’s new competency based curriculum, became my professional growth plan goals for the school year. For the entire year, I set out to bring forth the competencies I had learned over a summer semester, into my grade three classroom. I had spent a year implementing changes to my teaching, explaining them to parents, as well as demonstrating various presentations to staff, based on these cross curricular competencies. The more I learned, the more I implemented, and throughout the process I saw the benefits of competency based learning. This is when I first realized I was capable of being an agent for change. By the time the year ended these competencies had changed multiple times. There appeared to be many visions in the development of a new curriculum and suddenly, with a change in government, there was no focus, and no moving forward with any further curriculum development. I achieved what I set out to do, which was to use the knowledge that I had gained in my courses, to better my teaching practices.

With competency curriculum being placed on hold, and a new semester of classes, my focus and interests shifted for my classroom. Technology is a driving force around the world, and education is behind on its digital curriculum. The research, from the MEd courses that focused on technology curriculum, and the ability to network with teachers and administration, from various schools and boards, gave me great perspective on how digital learning affects 21st century learners and their developing skills. Seeing multiple technologies researched, presented, and im-
implemented, gave me a strong desire to advocate for the improvement of technology within my school. Developing a proposal for the purchase of Chromebooks, for my classroom, gave me the insight and experience to develop and demonstrate technology, just not as a curriculum, but as a necessary tool for today's learners and classrooms. I learned the importance of education keeping up with developing technologies, how to create an effective learning environment, and create a balanced proposal for student success. Unfortunately, my administration did not see the same benefits I did in the need for supplying students with digital tools at a grade three level. Rather, she provided the new technology to upper grades, feeling from my research, the Chromebook technology was better suited for older students. Frustrating, as I realized that varying pedagogies can cause conflict.

Although, I have changed my professional thinking in some ways, I also found validation in my teaching practices, and my beliefs about education. My pedagogy has been reinforced. Education to me involves being a continuous learner. It involves accumulating ideas, resources, materials and collaborating with other educators. Researching an academic journal was one of my favourite assignments. I learned more about the authenticity, validity, and reliability of a peer-reviewed academic journal. It left me questioning the multiple articles I have referenced over two years, and if they were valid and reliable sources. The MEd process has opened more doors for me and provided me with a system to network with educators in various educational roles. I have learned from their experiences, pedagogies, and passions, and will continue to do so. This will be the way I continue to learn and grow in my profession, since I have no desire to work towards a PhD.
The biggest development to my professional thinking, from this process is discipline. Personally and professionally. The best way for me to understand the concepts and readings was to relate them to my own context, both past and present. I have always been organized in my career as an elementary school teacher, but I had to learn to organize and prioritize papers and classes, as well as my planning and teaching. This process was enlightening for me and helped me better understand the struggles some of my students face daily. I was able to use myself as an example for the importance of discipline, believing in yourself, and being willing to persevere.

**Future Influences**

Recently, as I finish the MEd process and look back at the experience, as a whole, and the gains I have taken from it, I am shocked with myself in admitting where I hope this experience takes me. I began the program wanting to just reach the top of the pay grid. I had no desire to go into administration. So much so, I would openly say there was no way I would want become an assistant principal or principal. I forever saw myself in the classroom. A place I truly love and adore. However, as I learned more about leadership and the development of curriculum pedagogy, I developed greater understanding of the change process. This, combined with my current context, were the driving forces behind my thesis project. The more I learn, the more I feel my next step is to apply for administration positions within my district. I believe that I need to try this opportunity before I can honestly say it is not where my passions for education are. I have come this far in my own education and feel this would be the next appropriate step. As stated previously, after implementing the new competencies into my classroom and advocating for technology, I believe that I have the potential to be an agent of change and lead teachers to find their strengths.
When I began the MEd process, my current school was in the early stages of adopting a leadership program, intended to develop student leadership skill sets, staff collaboration, and school/community culture. I was passionate about it, I was a sponge for any and all information, and I was beginning to live, and use the terminology daily in my classroom. I was driven to see curriculum and student learning, within my context. I was focused on using leadership to build student confidence and proactivity, to self-motivate their own learning. It has only been two years, and as a school we have failed to be successful at creating an environment that encompasses, encourages, or even recognizes student and teachers as leaders. This sense of failure affects me as I believe it is needed in my current context and benefits the 21st century learner. The paper, ending my first course, focused on the leadership program, its implementation, and recorded successes. After continued research into teacher recognition, merit and evaluation systems, I began to understand that the valued teacher is what helps build leadership and school culture. My current teaching context and my new understanding of the importance of teacher value, makes me want to extend that knowledge to other staff members, schools, and possibly one day, should I get ambitious, throughout my district.

Should I move forward into an administration position, I would like to use aspects of my project with any willing staff. I would like to see the outcome it could have on teacher motivation and job satisfaction over a few years. I would also like to receive teacher feedback on the process of being evaluated and the evaluations themselves. The project I created is not perfect, but it is a starting point to provide teachers feedback, and to also provide administration a look at what their teachers do on a daily basis. My hope would be that it will give a sense of trust and belief that I believe in teachers and their efforts, and that I am here to not only lead but to learn,
as a member of their staff and administration team. Should this opportunity not present itself, I know I will begin to use the evaluations for myself, my students and my student’s parents. This will help me in developing some outcomes for my own motivation.

**Further Exploration**

My project was not only designed for educators to see their own growth, it involves school administration, so they may see the value of their teachers without bias, as well as, students and parents. These are important participants because they have an invested interest of the education a teacher is providing. This project was developed out of a passion that grew from my current teaching environment and my new leadership knowledge. In the future, should any individual wish to explore my project further, there are a few suggestion I recommend to be considered. It would be beneficial to look into the processes of an external evaluator, the long term impact teacher assessments would have on motivation, job satisfaction and student performance and finally, what implications recognition and/or merit has on the teaching profession within our province.

In my project, I proposed evaluations occur at staggered times for teachers and administration. Teachers are recommended to evaluate themselves on a year basis, and are encouraged to have students and parents complete an evaluation annually as well. To allow administration time to rotate through staff members and give teachers time to reflect and improve their practices, administrative evaluations are recommended every three years. Adding the component of an outside evaluator would also have to be on a rotation schedule in order to avoid over assessing a teacher and bombarding them with “suggestions” on how to improve their practice. I would recommend a five year rotation. Including an evaluation conducted by an individual from out
side of a school or district, would help alleviate a feeling of unfairness and judgment teachers sometimes have during an evaluation by their administration.

This type of project can cause stress and be controversial for teachers and unions. However, the long term impact may show these reviews are beneficial to teachers, their practices and student development. The possible outcome might be worth the risk of upsetting teachers in the beginning and could possibly improve multiple areas of education. Areas to focus on could include staff motivation, collaboration, and school culture. With the involvement of all stakeholders, the effects could demonstrate a possible increase in parent involvement and student performance. This is what my hope would be.

Although, I personally do not believe merit is warranted in the educational field. A teacher should be recognized for their hard work. Providing teachers with a sense of value gives them justification to keep creating lesson that meet the needs of all students. Yes, this is essential the teachers job, but through proper leadership and feedback employees feel recognized and put forth more energy into their job. The degree in which job satisfaction could be increased for teachers is another recommended area to further investigate.

Overall, this MEd was difficult, but also very rewarding. I am proud of the work I produced, the effort I put into it, and the experience I had.
Appendix

Appendix A

Personal Teacher Survey

This survey is for individual teachers to answer about their teaching, preparedness, and professional development

* Required

I prepared a year plan?
- Yes
- No

I reviewed my year plan throughout the school year?
- Always
- Sometimes
- Never

I was prepared to teach my daily lessons? *
- Always
- Mostly
- Sometimes
- Never

My lessons were related to the Alberta Program of Studies
- Always
- Mostly
- Sometimes
- Never

What have you done this year that is innovative, creative and/or unique?

What activity or lesson was your favourite this year and why?
What lessons/activities are you hoping to try in the future?

Have you communicated effectively with parents?
- Yes
- No

List PD you attended to improve your teaching/instruction?

What PD activities/lessons did you implement into your classroom?

List reasons why you contacted parents.
Reflect and share on a difficult situation you dealt with this year. How did you handle it? Would you have done anything differently and why?

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Student Survey

What was your favourite part of this year?

What did your teacher help you the most with?

What assignments are you most proud of this year?

What do you wish your teacher had taught you more about this year?

What do you still think you need help in learning?

Did you try your best at every assignment this year?

☐ Yes
☐ No

Submit

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Parent Survey

Did the teacher effectively communicate with you this school year?

1 2 3 4 5
Strongly Disagree ○ ○ ○ ○ Strongly Agree

Were the expectations of the grade made clear to you by the teacher?

1 2 3 4 5
Strongly Disagree ○ ○ ○ ○ Strongly Agree

Was the teacher available to meet with you if you needed?

1 2 3 4 5
Strongly Disagree ○ ○ ○ ○ Strongly Agree

Did you child enjoy their teacher this year?

1 2 3 4
No, Absolutely not ○ ○ ○ ○ Yes, Absolutely

Was the teacher helpful in helping promote your child's learning?

1 2 3 4 5
Strongly Agree ○ ○ ○ ○ Strongly Disagree

What would you like to have seen the teacher include in their lessons this year?
Appendix D

Administrative Survey

Is the teacher a team player
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] Sometimes
- [ ] No

Can you rely on the teacher?
- [1] 1
- [2] 2
- [3] 3
- [4] 4
- [5] 5

Absolutely [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] Absolutely Not

Does the teacher provide a welcoming and conducive working environment?
- [1] 1
- [2] 2
- [3] 3
- [4] 4
- [5] 5

Strongly Agree [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] Strongly Disagree

Does the teacher volunteer for extracurricular activities? If so which ones

Does the teacher help create and promote a positive work and learning environment? Explain.

Does the teacher create positive working relationships? Explain
Do they create open lines of communication for parents?
- Yes
- Sometimes
- No

Do they integrate new technologies and skills into their lessons and classroom?

Does the teacher develop year plans, unit plans and lesson plans that match the program of studies?
- Yes
- Mostly
- Often
- Sometimes
- No

Does the teacher actively engage their students? How?

Is the teacher able to maintain a classroom management system?
- Yes
- Mostly
- Often
- Sometimes
Does the teacher collaborate with other staff members?

- Always
- Mostly
- Often
- Sometimes
- Not Enough
- Never

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