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## A critical examination of practices and perceptions of current performance evaluation models for theatre arts teachers in Virginia

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A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF PRACTICES AND PERCEPTIONS  
OF CURRENT PERFORMANCE EVALUATION MODELS  
FOR THEATRE ARTS TEACHERS IN VIRGINIA

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A Dissertation

Presented to

The Faculty of the School of Education  
The College of William and Mary in Virginia

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

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by

Shelley L. Nowacek

Approved September 29, 2008

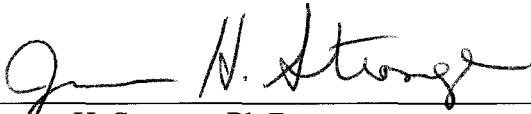
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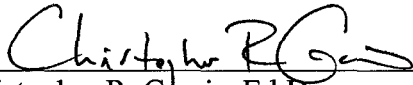
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Approved September 29, 2008 by



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James H. Stronge, Ph.D.  
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Abstract

Methods and models used to evaluate the teaching performance of theatre arts teachers appear to have limited applicability due to the specialized nature of theatre in the classroom. Instructional leaders whose responsibilities include observation and evaluation may find additional challenges when charged with evaluating theatre arts teachers using general educational evaluation models. This qualitative study explored the nature of the practices and perceptions of theatre arts teachers and the administrators charged with evaluating them through the backdrop of Joint Committee Standards of Educational Evaluation.

Though the Joint Committee outlined specific measures to ensure that teacher performance evaluation models and methods are properly designed and implemented through the personnel evaluation standards, this study concluded that those standards often are not used properly or do not apply to theatre arts teachers. Moreover, administrators are left to determine the best implementation of general evaluation instruments in specialized subjects such as theatre. Implications of this study indicate that better tools for theatre arts teacher performance evaluation must be provided so that theatre arts teachers can reflect, respond, and grow professionally in order to provide students with the best arts education possible. By providing proper and effective

evaluation tools, theatre arts teachers can educate students to meet the needs of a changing world.

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SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY

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## Chapter One: The Problem

### *Introduction*

Theatre is everywhere in society. Theatre is enlarged on film screens in thousands of movieplexes; reduced onscreen in millions of homes. However, theatre is declining in America's secondary schools (Southeast Institute for Education in Theatre, 1996). A study by the Secondary Theatre Project, sponsored by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, defined five "crucial qualitative factors" for secondary theatre education (Seidel, 1991, p. 17). In order of their perceived significance to students, they were: the teacher; the policies and practices of the school district administration; dramatic production; community environment; and the theatre curriculum (Seidel, 1991). These factors are inextricably linked and yet it appears that the first two most important factors, teachers and the policies and practices of the administration, are disconnected (Seidel, 1991).

Gardner (2004) argued that to understand the arts involves mastery of the productive practices in a particular domain or discipline, coupled with the capacity to adopt different stances toward artistic work, including that of audience member, critic, performer, and creator. The "understander" in the arts is one who can comfortably move among these various stances, just as the understander in the sciences can alternate among several modes of knowing or representation, assuming the roles of experimenter, theorist, and critic of investigations carried out personally or by others (p. 239).

This view of understanding is remote from the conception of the artist held by many. In a more stereotypical version, the artist is “special” and waits for inspiration. Great works either appear or emerge, and there is no discernable relationship between the processes used and the products that result. Nor, in this view, is there any relationship between the artist and others; the creative artist is seen as remote from the audience, as a critic or perhaps a performer. Effective arts education must confront these stereotypes, ultimately replacing them with an appreciation of the complexity of the artistic process and the ensemble of roles it engenders (Gardner, 2004).

But who among educators hold these stereotypes and what happens to arts education as a result of stereotypes? They may be most often held by school administrators about the arts and artistic processes. That administrators – who make prioritized decisions about programming in their schools (Hoy & Miskel, 2001) --hold such stereotypes seems evident when one reviews the treatment of the performing arts in public education. For example, in a national report concerning arts education in America’s schools it was revealed that only sixteen percent of the schools surveyed offered dramatic arts instruction through their language arts curricula (Carey, Farris, Sikes, & Foy, 1995). Yet though only a small percentage of the schools reported that the performing arts were taught directly, more than fifty percent said that classroom teachers integrated dramatic arts into their curricula in other subject areas to facilitate students’ learning. While the performing arts do not appear to be valued enough by those who make decisions about what should be scheduled into the school day, teachers seem to have enough awareness of their importance to incorporate the performing arts into their teaching methods (Burton, Horowitz, & Abeles, 2000). Perhaps educational leaders have

not been linked closely to or involved personally with the arts or arts educators – enough to recognize their importance to students’ learning on multiple levels.

If the arts are to thrive, administrators and other decision-makers must discard whatever stereotypes they may hold and replace them with a realistic understanding of arts education craft, process, goals, and sensibilities; theatre arts educators are in need of accurate and fair evaluation systems that measure their abilities as well as motivate them to improve their teaching practices for the benefit of their students.

#### *Statement of the Problem*

Current methods for the evaluation of teachers appear to have limited applicability for the majority of performing arts teachers due to the specialized nature of what it is they teach (Maranzano, 2000; Peterson, 2000; Rush, 1997; Stronge, 2006; Taebel, 1990a, 1990b; Wolf, 1973). Instructional leaders whose responsibilities include observation and evaluation may find additional challenges when charged with evaluating performing arts teachers using general educational models. In order for educational leaders to make informed evaluation decisions, it is important for them to consider the contributions of performing arts teachers. The branch of the performing arts that will be the focus of this study will be theatre arts. It generally is held that administrators do not have the expertise that theatre arts teachers have in the area of best practices in theatre education and, consequently, expertise in evaluation methods applicable for theatre arts teachers (Henniger, 2002; Landon, 1965). It is the knowledge of theatre arts teachers that needs to be extrapolated in order to understand what is happening currently in teacher performance evaluation and what needs to be changed in order to make evaluation for theatre arts teachers an experience in which they can learn and grow and as a result be



better prepared to teach their students. Thus, the problem investigated in this study was to understand the issues surrounding evaluation in regards to performing arts (i.e., theatre/drama) teachers. Specifically, the following issues were investigated:

Research Questions:

1. How do theatre teachers and administrators perceive performance evaluation practices?

(The Joint Committee of Standards Evaluation informs the following four research questions)

2. How do theatre teachers and administrators perceive the quality of evaluation in terms of propriety standards?
3. How do theatre teachers and administrators perceive the quality of evaluation in terms of utility standards?
4. How do theatre teachers and administrators perceive the quality of evaluation in terms of feasibility standards?
5. How do theatre teachers and administrators perceive the quality of evaluation in terms of accuracy standards?

#### *Significance of the Study*

In situations in which the performing arts are not valued, classes are edged out of building space needed for instruction and performances, with those who teach performing arts not consulted in decision-making that affects programming directly (Maranzano, 2000). This is costly to performing arts programs in several ways. If performing arts teachers do not see that their services and their programs are valued, it is likely that they will exit the profession, leaving behind those who do not have similarly specialized

expertise, but are instead other-discipline teachers who must take on performance classes as part of their contract-based teaching loads (Demorest & Morrison, 2000; Maranzano, 2000). In one national study, it was revealed that only eight percent of dramatic arts programs offered were taught by drama specialists (Carey et al., 1995). Over time, staffing practices like these can lead to a downward spiral in the quality and longevity of a solid performing arts program (Landon, 1965).

How can that quality be rebuilt? That quality can be rebuilt by using stronger tools through which to work and communicate. In 1965, Landon discussed the leadership that is essential to the survival of fine arts programming by saying: “Quality teaching in the arts becomes increasingly possible if the public schools provide...instructional leadership by persons trained in the arts to provide direction and coordination” (p. 74). What Landon is suggesting is that administrators have knowledge in the arts as well as stronger communication tools in order to understand and properly connect with performing arts teachers in their schools.

Although the above statements were written more than forty years ago, it appears that little has changed since then in the administration of arts programs. We know, via Eisner (2005), that participation in the arts advances student achievement in multiple arenas, helping children to develop holistically. Administrators may hold keys to the success and self-efficacy of both performing arts teachers and their students. However, a variety of tools in which to communicate and build stronger programs do not exist. One of the most powerful communication tools an administrator has is the process of evaluation. Performance appraisals affect the decisions that organizational leaders make about the selection, placement, retention, recognition, rewards, and professional growth

of employees (Danielson & McGreal, 2000; Peterson, 2000; Stronge, 2006).

Current methods for the evaluation of teachers appear to have limited applicability for the majority of performing arts teachers due to the specialized nature of what it is they teach (Maranzano, 2000). Instructional leaders whose responsibilities include observation and evaluation may find additional challenges when charged with evaluating performing arts teachers using general educational models. In order for educational leaders to make informed evaluation decisions, it is important for them to consider the contributions of performing arts teachers.

The future roles of fine arts programs in America's schools will be determined in large part by school leaders. These administrators will continue to make the arts an integral part of the curriculum only if they are convinced of the academic, social, and aesthetic value of supporting such programs, and the connections that arts education has to the curriculum as a whole (Demorest & Morrison, 2000). The issues facing arts education are ones that school leaders *could* address in productive ways because they have the power to do so. Inadequate funding, space requirements, and scheduling flexibility are challenges that performing arts teachers face; these can be resolved by educational leaders if they understand the importance of such issues to performing arts programming, and if they choose to support performing arts programs through the power of their administrative positions. Supporters of arts education argue that the arts should be a fundamental part of the school day and, therefore, such logistical challenges should be resolved (e.g., Fowler, 1994; Consortium of National Arts Education Association, 1994; Rush, 1997). Yet if administrators ignore these issues and permit a business-as-usual approach to performing arts programming, it will suffer the inevitable

consequences, and a powerful message about the limited importance of performing arts programs could be sent to students, teachers, and community members.

Involvement in the arts can help students develop holistically. And yet the arts are persistently overlooked in public education funding and instructional time allotment.

Eisner (2005) echoed these beliefs:

Make no mistake, the curriculum we prescribe for schools and the time we allocate to subjects show children more what adults believe is important for them to study than the amount of time allocated to them. In American schools, the arts receive about two hours of instructional time per week at the elementary level and are generally not a required subject of study at the secondary level. The allocation of time to what we teach has other consequences as well. The amount of time allocated to a field of study influences the kinds of mental skills children have the opportunity to acquire. (p. 129)

That little time in the school day is allocated to the arts, as Eisner described, seems to reveal what we value as a nation in education. In the current educational climate, “basic” academic skills are valued, while the arts are considered to be “a frill” (Winner & Cooper, 2000). Arts education is often at risk as an aspect of educational reform. This risk is rooted in national educational policy, with arts education’s fate resting at the local level, since building-level administrators make budgeting, scheduling and hiring decisions and assign teachers to implement those decisions (Consortium of National Arts Education Association, 1994; Fiske, 1999; Rush, 1997; Eisner, 2005).

These are concerns for both the general population of students who need arts education as part of the general curriculum, as well as gifted and creative students whose needs are even more urgent (Eisner, 2005). Curriculum specialists tend to overlook artistically creative students in their plans “including content or course descriptions, subject guides, and learning materials and activities” (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004, p. 110). Such lack of attention in administrative and curriculum decision-making, added to administrative disregard, could pose a threat to the future existence of performing arts programming in public schools. Students will be short changed and deprived of educational opportunities if performing arts programming disappears.

It is clear that arts education is important. But are students receiving the best theatre arts education possible? Are teachers of the arts providing the best theatre arts education possible? How do we know if theatre arts teachers are providing students with an appropriate education in theatre? Are theatre arts teachers growing professionally within the context of their careers? Without proper performance evaluation of theatre arts teachers, these questions cannot be answered.

#### *Definition of Key Terms*

**Administrator:** For the purposes of this study, administrator refers to any licensed personnel with supervisory responsibilities who provide information that is used in creating either formative or summative evaluations.

**Formative evaluation:** Refers to all activities associated with professional growth and development in the process of teacher evaluation.

**Performance evaluation:** Refers to all activities associated with teacher evaluation regardless of form and includes all aspects of both formative and summative evaluation

processes; examples can include, but are not limited to, observation, portfolio review, and written evaluations.

**Summative evaluation:** Refers to all activities associated with rendering final accountability for a teacher's competence, tenure status as well as recommend appropriate employment decisions.

**Theatre arts:** Theatre arts is an art form which involves an actor and an audience and any additional elements that enhance that relationship. Some theatre arts programs include elaborate facilities while others may involve a simple classroom space. It is sometimes referred to as drama.

**Theatre arts teacher:** For the purposes of this study, theatre arts teachers refers to those teachers whose major responsibilities include teaching theatre arts as well as handling after school performances of any kind, including one act play festivals, musicals, stage plays, or other theatrical performances.

**The Joint Committee Standards definitions:**

**The Accuracy Standards:** Are intended to determine whether an evaluation produces sound information. Personnel evaluations must be technically adequate and as complete as possible to allow sound judgments and decisions to be made (Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 2007).

**The Feasibility Standards:** Are intended to guide personnel evaluation systems to ensure ease of implementation, efficiency in use of time and resources, adequacy of funding, and viability from a political standpoint (Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 2007).

The Propriety Standards: Are intended to ensure that a personnel evaluation will be conducted legally, ethically, and with due regard for the welfare of the evaluatee and those involved in the evaluation (Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 2007).

The Utility Standards: Are intended to guide evaluations so that they will be informative, timely, and influential (Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 2007).

#### *Delimitations*

The results of this study are based on voluntary participation of theatre arts teachers in Virginia and, therefore, may not reflect a complete range of experiences of those who teach theatre arts in other states. Additionally, factors may exist which substantially affect theatre arts teachers' responses that were not identified in this study. For example, the relationship between the administrator and the theatre teacher may have an impact on the perceptions of the participants in the study; additionally, the success of the theatre program based on the participants' perspectives may influence the responses given.

#### *Limitations of the Study*

Creating a model for the evaluation of theatre teachers was beyond the scope of this initial study. However, understanding what theatre arts teachers perceive as the pitfalls to current evaluation as well as discussing evaluation experiences and the use of current models can lead to future explorations in the area of teacher performance evaluation in Virginia. Additional limitations of the study include the nature of the study

itself: based solely on perceptions and practices of the participants and not current models.

*Major Assumptions*

1. Theatre arts teachers understand their jobs as professionals and as such possess the skills and knowledge to make valid judgments regarding evaluation practices and their respective impact.
2. Administrative personnel are typically charged with the responsibility of evaluation; such personnel may or may not understand theatre arts.
3. Quality leadership and teaching are central to the success of theatre arts programs.
4. Skilled theatre arts teachers have a direct impact on the contributions of performing arts experiences in public schools.
5. The process of evaluation varies from district to district in Virginia.
6. Theatre arts teachers, like other teachers, need evaluation methods that aid them in professional growth and foster future goals for their programs.
7. The interview responses from theatre teachers will accurately reflect their experiences with evaluation practices currently in use in their districts.



## Chapter Two: Review of Related Literature

### *Introduction*

In order to understand the role of theatre in education and the role that personnel administrators are delegated in measuring and retaining quality educators in theatre arts through evaluation, this review of literature related to the problem to be investigated delineates the following subjects in this order: 1) importance of theatre in education, 2) general purposes of evaluation systems, 3) purposes and practices of teacher evaluation, 4) documenting performance in teacher evaluation, 6) current models and methods for evaluating theatre arts teachers, and 7) theatre arts education evaluation in Virginia. First, however, a brief overview of the significance of arts education is provided.

### *The Significance of Arts Education*

Arts education is important to all students, and as such, should be treated as an important part of education; not as an add-on or elective (Consortium of National Arts Education Association, 1994; Fiske, 1999). Fowler (1994) provided a rationale for a more comprehensive approach to arts education. The arts are necessary because they:

- Teach divergent rather than convergent thinking;
- Develop craftsmanship and the ability to apply aesthetics;
- Introduce individuals to perceptions and understandings they could not acquire any other way;
- Provide insight and wisdom that enlighten understanding, making it deeper and more comprehensive;

- Facilitate human communications within and across cultures;
- Help individuals define who they are and how to articulate their own special sense of being;
- Document human history, distinguishing relationship to time by showing humanity as it was yesterday, as it is today, and as it will be tomorrow;
- Replenish the human spirit and, by nurturing, consoling, and inspiring it, restores humanity. (p. 4)

Arts education benefits both its students and society (Consortium of National Arts Education Association, 1994). It benefits the student because it helps to cultivate the whole child, gradually building many kinds of literacy while developing intuition, reasoning, imagination, and dexterity through unique forms of expression and communication. This process not only requires an active mind but a trained one. Arts education also helps students by initiating them into a variety of ways of perceiving and thinking (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004). In an increasingly technological environment overloaded with sensory data, the ability to perceive, interpret, understand and evaluate stimuli is critical. The performing arts can help students develop multiple capabilities for understanding and deciphering an image- and symbol-laden world (Henniger, 2002).

An education in the arts also benefits society because students of the arts are given powerful tools for understanding human experiences, both past and present, learning to adapt to and respect others' ways of thinking, working and expressing themselves; make decisions in situations in which there are no standard answers; analyze nonverbal communication; and make informed judgments about cultural products and issues (Consortium of National Arts Education Association, 1994).

*Theatre in Education*

In a national report concerning arts education in America's schools (Carey, Farris, Sikes, & Foy, 1995) it was revealed that only sixteen percent of the schools surveyed offered dramatic arts instruction through their language arts curricula. Yet though only a small percentage of the schools reported that the performing arts were taught directly, more than fifty percent said that classroom teachers integrated dramatic arts into their curricula in other subject areas to facilitate students' learning. While the performing arts do not appear to be valued enough by those who make decisions about what should be scheduled into the school day, teachers seem to have enough awareness of their importance to incorporate the performing arts into their teaching methods (Burton, Horowitz, & Abeles, 2000).

Theorists and teachers have been quick to defend the necessity of theatre in education; Hamblen (1997) stated that theatre arts are a means by which students become actively engaged in the learning process as opposed to bored, passive students. Gardner (1999) argued that students have intelligence which registers in eight categories all of which connect to theatre:

1. linguistic (through words and language);
2. logical (through reasoning);
3. spatial (through pictures);
4. bodily-kinesthetic (through the body);
5. musical (through rhythm);
6. interpersonal (through people);
7. intrapersonal (through the self);

8. naturalistic (through the natural).

Gardner (1999) further stated that educators are not meeting the learning needs of their students if they are not given the opportunity to use these intelligences. In the case of theatre, these needs are met. Gardner (1999) noted that school systems often judge student performance largely on standardized test scores, which typically assess only two of the multiple intelligences: linguistic and logical (through mathematics); students who are strong in these traditional intelligences also are likely to do well in public schools, while those who demonstrate competencies in other intelligence areas are often frustrated and can be misinterpreted as less than intelligent. Gardner (1999) trusted that if students were taught in ways that strengthen all intelligences, students would have more success in academics. Gardner's (1999) research led him to ascertain that because these intelligences are derived from theatre and the arts, that teaching through the intelligences parallels teaching through theatre and the arts.

A Harvard University study conducted by Winner and Hetland (2000) entitled *Reviewing Education and the Arts Project (REAP)* examined articles that illustrated a relationship between the arts and academic achievement. The researchers conducted a set of ten meta-analyses on selected reports. Through the research a causal link was found between classroom drama (enacting texts) and a variety of verbal areas (Winner & Hetland, 2000). In all cases, students who enacted texts were compared to students who read the same texts but did not enact them. Drama not only helped children's verbal skills with respect to the texts enacted; it also helped children's verbal skills when applied to new, non-enacted texts. Thus, drama helps to build verbal skills that transfer to new materials. According to Winner and Hetland, such an effect has great value for

education: verbal skill is highly valued, adding such drama techniques costs little in terms of effort or expense, and a high proportion of students are influenced by such curricular changes.

*The State of Theatre Education*

If substantial programs are ever to exist, theatre must be perceived as an academic discipline relevant to all students rather than an extracurricular activity for a selected few (Southeast Institute for Education in Theatre, 1996). The teaching of theatrical knowledge and skill through the inherent processes of theatre can result in an appreciation of the complexity of the art form, recognition of its existence in all cultures throughout history, and an understanding of its power and relevance in the global society (Southeast Institute for Education in Theatre, 1996). If substantial theatre programs are to exist, teachers of theatre should be privy to the same professional standards and evaluations processes as their colleagues (Southeast Institute for Education in Theatre, 1996).

A nationwide survey of high school theatre programs was conducted by the Educational Theatre Association in 1991. Researchers surveyed a random sample of schools with eleventh and twelfth grades and total school enrollments of three-hundred or more. The sample was geographically representative and included rural, suburban, and urban schools and a cross section of school types (Seidel, 1991).

The survey found that while 88 percent of the nation's high schools had some type of theatre activity (either one or more theatre courses, or co-curricular theatre productions, or both), only 59 percent offered both a theatre course for credit and co-curricular theatre activities. Additionally, only 55 percent of theatre teachers reported

that their students had some of theatre experience prior to their high school education (Seidel, 1991).

In the same survey, principals were asked to rank a number of skills and attributes that students should possess by the time they graduated (Seidel, 1991). The principals surveyed responded that the top three skills and attributes should include: communication skills, critical thinking, and self-confidence (Seidel, 1991). Principals and teachers were then asked about theatre's ability to teach or strengthen several skills and attributes, including self-discipline, creativity, group dynamics and problem-solving skills, self-confidence, business management skills, interpersonal and group communication, and aesthetics and criticism. Principals gave theatre programs above-average marks in all of these areas but one, business management. According the study, theatre teachers say they actively teach or strengthen all of these areas through class work and/or productions (Seidel, 1991). According to this study, what administrators report to want for their students are the very things that theatre teachers are offering.

And yet, despite these statistics, just under two-thirds of the teachers in the same study reported that principals attended their theatrical productions (Seidel, 1991). Even more distressing, according to the study, was that principals often hired theatre teachers for their ability to teach other subjects, such as English, as their primary responsibility and theatre as a secondary subject (Seidel, 1991). In additional, the study found that the criteria that principals use to evaluate candidates for when hiring an educator for a theatre position seems "to reflect the discipline's secondary status" (Seidel, 1991, p. 6). The study found that 86 percent of principals were looking for some level of theatre experience (65 percent sought community theatre or university experience, 59 percent

sought experience with high school theatre, 48 percent looked for technical theatre expertise); only 60 percent sought college or degree training and fewer than half required a prospective teacher to have majored in theatre. The study further reported that only 40 percent of principals required that the teacher hired have a bachelor's degree in theatre, just 9 percent required a master's degree in theatre, and 9 percent considered a minor in theatre as sufficient qualification (Seidel, 1991). A little over a third of the principals surveyed, 36 percent, sought a certification in theatre. These were the findings, despite the principals' surveyed responses that ranked the top three skills and attributes a student should have upon graduation being communication skills, critical thinking, and self-confidence, all traits that theatre teachers reported including in their curriculum. The study also found that principals were not aware of the value of theatre for other students as well as the school's standing in the community (Seidel, 1991).

Finally, the study concluded that the teacher made the biggest difference between a typical program and an above-average one (Seidel, 1991). The study compared the programs in the top 25 percent with those in the middle of the spectrum, and found that many of the factors making the biggest difference were those that were influenced by the teacher. Among the strongest one-fourth of the theatre programs survey, there was a marked increase over the average program in:

- the touring of a performance (a 133 percent increase);
- professional theatre artists visiting the school (an 89 percent increase);
- the production of three or more plays annually (a 79 percent increase);
- the number of theatre-related meetings attended by the teacher (a 67 percent increase):

- the likelihood the teacher belongs to a state, regional, or national theatre education association (a 63 percent increase);
- the likelihood the teacher has continued theatre training by taking college or university course work (a 61 percent increase);
- student directing opportunities (a 49 percent increase);
- the likelihood that the teacher has taught theatre for longer than average—eleven or more years (a 40 percent increase);
- the non-high school directing experience of the teacher (a 29 percent increase);
- the likelihood the teacher majored in theatre in college (a 22 percent increase).

(Seidel, 1991, p. 15)

Finally, one study found that the average theatre teacher averaged fourteen years teaching experience and slightly more than a decade of teaching theatre (Southeast Institute for Education in Theatre, 1996). Theatre teachers did not generally teach theatre exclusively. Six out ten theatre teachers reported that theatre was a “secondary assignment” for them (Southeast Institute for Education in Theatre, 1996, p. 3).

The contributions that theatre arts makes to public education requires that theatre remain as part of a necessary curriculum (Burton, Horowitz, & Abeles, 2000; Consortium of National Arts Education Association, 1994; Eisner, 2005; Gardner, 2004). In fact, the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) lists the arts among the core academic subjects, requiring schools to enable all students to achieve in the arts and to reap the full benefits of a comprehensive arts education (NCLB, 2002). However, without proper evaluation of theatre arts teachers, theatre education will continue to decline in the context of education. To understand how theatre teachers are evaluated, it is important to review the



evaluation methods for all teachers and then compare these methods to a unique subject matter such as theatre arts.

A study by the Secondary Theatre Project, sponsored by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, defined five “crucial qualitative factors” for secondary theatre education (Seidel, 1991, p. 17). In order of their perceived significance to students, they were: the teacher; the policies and practices of the school district administration; dramatic production; community environment; and the theatre curriculum (Seidel, 1991). These factors are inextricably linked and yet there appears that the first two most important factors, teachers and administrators, are disconnected through significant types of policies and practices (Seidel, 1991). The practice of evaluation is one of the most important factors for communicating professional goals and expectations to teachers via administration (Peterson, 2000).

#### *General Purposes of Evaluation Systems*

According to Scriven (1973), the main purpose of evaluation is to determine the worth, value, and merits of teaching. There are other ways to classify the purposes of teacher evaluation, but teacher evaluation serves at least three major purposes; the difference among these three purposes are most apparent when their impact is considered at the level of the individual teacher (Natriello, 1990). The following purposes of evaluation describe the purposes of evaluation from the micro- to macro-level of public schools as institutions or systems.

First, evaluation is often used as a way to influence the performance of an individual teacher within their discipline (subject) (Natriello, 1990). The goal is to improve performance that is already within a range of acceptable for holders of that

position. Peterson (2000) described this aspect of performance improvement as being the most discussed purpose of teacher evaluation; the supposition is that feedback, with specific praise and criticism, helps professionals self-regulate.

The second purpose of teacher evaluation is that it may be used to control movement into and out of positions (Natriello, 1990). Evaluations may serve to screen individuals attempting to enter a position, to retain individuals in a position, or to enforce the exit of individuals from a position (Natriello, 1990). Bridges (1992) stated that hiring, retaining and terminating teachers is the most visible purpose of teacher evaluation. As a result, other kinds of staffing decisions are virtually non-existent; school districts do not have systematic evaluations that identify teacher leaders or promote teachers to advanced ranks (Peterson, 2000).

The third purpose of evaluation is to convey a sense of justice and equity both about the organization and about its control over others (Natriello, 1990). In this context, evaluation processes are designed to influence performers by convincing them that the evaluation process itself is legitimate and deserves recognition and compliance (Natriello, 1990; Peterson, 2000). Lortie (1975) described teaching as a profession remarkably barren of feedback that indicates quality and authoritative reassurance. Evaluation systems must be perceived as fair and legitimate and meet the expectations of the organizational members if they are to function and operate as systems for one group of individuals to control the behavior of another group (Lortie, 1975; Natriello, 1990; Peterson, 2000).

Thus, teacher evaluation can be used by schools: 1) to influence the performance of the individual teacher; 2) to guide the decision making process of hiring, retaining, and

firing of personnel; and 3) to legitimize control attempts of the school organization (Bridges, 1992; Lortie, 1975; Natriello, 1990; Peterson, 2000; Stronge, 2006). As described above, teacher evaluation systems were created to benefit both the individual teacher and the school organization; these evaluation systems have far-reaching effects for teachers in contributing to their ability to survive and thrive in the workplace. The following section on current practices in teacher evaluation illustrates the most commonly familiar evaluation purposes and practices, especially as seen by teachers.

### *Purposes and Practices of Teacher Evaluation*

In a time when student achievement is seen as the gateway for the success of the future for this nation, school improvement is a central educational issue. The core of school improvement is teaching and learning: the key to student success is a teacher who is successful in the classroom (Stronge, 2006). The essential issue is that effective teachers are needed to guide the learning of students and without effective evaluation systems, we cannot know if we have effective teachers to guide those learners (Stronge & Tucker, 2003). With the emphasis on teacher quality expressed in the *No Child Left Behind* act a premium is placed on teacher evaluation systems unlike it has ever been expressed before.

So why does quality teacher evaluation matter? It is because the quality of any school is directly linked to the performance of the individual people who work there (Stronge, 2006). Good evaluation practices lead to stronger relationships and mutual respect between administrators and teachers in most educational settings (Witziers, Bosker & Kruger, 2003). A conceptually sound and properly implemented evaluation system for teachers is an essential component for an effective school and by extension for

the success student achievement (Stronge, 2006). The two most commonly cited purposes of personnel evaluation familiar to most *teachers* are personal growth/performance improvement and accountability (Danielson & McGreal, 2000; Peterson, 2000).

*Performance Improvement and Accountability*

Performance improvement and accountability in teacher performance evaluation are not competing, but supportive interests—these two roles are inextricably intertwined in the total evaluation process (Stronge, 2006). Thus, comprehensive teacher performance evaluation systems are most often rooted in these two broad categories:

- Improvement-oriented, contributing to the personal and professional development needs of the individual (teacher) as well as improvement within the school (i.e., formative focus).
- Accountability-oriented, contributing to the personal goals of the teacher and to the mission of the program, the school, and the total ability of performance (i.e., summative focus). (Stronge, 2006, p. 5)

Improvement orientation places the emphasis on teacher improvement, professional growth and development within the school (Stronge, 2006). Teacher evaluation for the purpose of professional growth and development gained popularity in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Duke, 1995). A teacher performance assessment and evaluation system should be a balanced relationship between school- or district-wide goals and individual teacher professional growth and improvement (Stronge, 2006).

*Formative evaluation.* The formative evaluation phase is an ongoing process of data collection, conferencing, and development plans. The purpose of the formative

phase of teacher evaluation is professional improvement through application of procedures set forth by the school district (Valentine, 1992). Formative evaluation, according to Barber (1990) is:

...a helping, caring process that provides data to teachers for making decisions about how they can best improve their own teaching techniques, styles or strategies. Formative evaluation must occur in close collaboration with the person being evaluated—he or she must agree to it, be an intensive part of it, participate willingly in it, and, in the case of experienced teachers, even direct it, thus a new dimension of self-assessment. (p. 216)

Formative evaluation situates the teacher as an active and self-directing professional and includes “all activities associated with growth and development including: self-assessment, goal setting, and feedback from such sources as peer review, peer coaching, and portfolio development” (Howard & McColskey, 2001, p. 48) Formative assessment can include a variety of processes and data from in-classroom observations and the examination of artifacts including lesson plans, student work samples, the result of formal and informal student assessments (teacher-developed and standardized tests), artifacts from portfolios, and findings from action research (Zepeda, 2006).

*Summative evaluation.* At the other end of the spectrum, summative evaluation is more concerned with accountability and the legal aspects of teacher competence, rendering final judgments on performance and assisting in making other decisions, including granting of tenure, removing probationary status, continuing contracts and dismissal (Scriven, 1987). In contrast to formative evaluation, the summative evaluation

phase is a brief, infrequently used process the purpose of which is to recommend appropriate employment decisions. It is the personnel decision-making phase of the evaluation system (Valentine, 1992). To this end, summative evaluation helps administrators answer the question, “Will this teacher work here next year?” (McGreal, 1983). Outcome orientation and the term accountability gained popularity in the 1970s and is often evoked to justify the need for teacher evaluation (Duke, 1995). In the outcome orientation, the evaluation system reflects both the teacher’s goals and the school’s goals (Stronge, 2006).

The differences between formative and summative evaluation are deliberate; the leadership of most school districts use evaluation systems that include both formative and summative evaluation decision making; these are the most common approaches to teacher evaluation and there are pitfalls to both as well as the methods that are embedded in both of these (Stronge, 2006).

#### *Models of Teacher Evaluation*

The evaluation methods most familiar to teachers may be described as observation, portfolio or other methods, but they can be broadly categorized in the following evaluation models: teacher trait model; process-oriented model; duties-based evaluation; accountability; goals-based evaluation; professional growth model; and the hybrid model (Stronge & Tucker, 2003).

- **Teacher Trait Model:** this model is characterized by a checklist of desirable attributes for teachers that describe pre-existing personality traits (Stronge & Tucker, 2003).

- **Process-Oriented Model:** this model is most familiar to educators because it focuses on the instructional processes happening in the classroom that can be observed by those responsible for evaluation; additionally, the observational data are organized by specific teaching behaviors that research has shown to be positively correlated with student achievement (Stronge & Tucker, 2003).
- **Duties-Based Evaluation:** this model is based on specific described tasks of requirements of the job; for example, one requirement might include the frequent assessment of student learning (Stronge & Tucker, 2003).
- **Accountability:** this model links judgment about teacher performance to student achievement of instructional objectives or other outcome measures (Stronge & Tucker, 2003).
- **Goals-Based Evaluation:** this model reflects the business model of Managing by Objectives (MBO) and is used by school systems in combination with other models; and it is viewed to be appropriate with more experienced teachers (Stronge & Tucker, 2003).
- **Professional Growth Model:** this model of evaluation shifts the focus to individual teachers and their development as professionals; in addition, observers provide ongoing feedback for teacher improvement based on areas of interest as identified by the teacher (Stronge & Tucker, 2003).
- **Hybrid:** this model is the most common because school systems do not often use a pure form of any of the previously described models, but instead a combination that utilizes a variety that integrate multiple purposes (Stronge & Tucker, 2003).

Table 1: Models of Teacher Evaluation; Advantages and Limitations

<b>Teacher Evaluation Methods</b>	<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Limitations</b>
Teacher Trait Model	<p>Quick and easy</p> <p>Time honored</p> <p>Discretionary judgment for the administrator</p> <p>Minimal professional contact required</p>	<p>Subjectivity in rating presence and degree (e.g., creativity)</p> <p>Not a direct reflection on teaching performance</p> <p>Difficulty in offering assistance for professional growth</p>
Process Oriented Model	<p>Specific, behavioral indices for evaluation</p> <p>Common language for principals in describing elements of a lesson</p> <p>Promotion of research-based teaching behaviors</p>	<p>Prescriptive in terms of behaviors to be promoted and assessed</p> <p>Possible emphasis on style variables over job responsibilities</p> <p>Restrictive for experienced teachers</p>
Duties-Based Evaluation	<p>Satisfaction of legal requirement for being job-related</p> <p>Avoidance of questions regarding teaching style</p>	<p>Difficulty in obtaining agreement on duties</p> <p>Questions arise about the relative importance of each duty</p>
Accountability	<p>Popular with the general public and politicians</p> <p>Focus on educational outcomes</p> <p>Clear expectations for improved student learning</p>	<p>Assumption that teacher performance is a direct, causal factor in student performance and behavior</p> <p>Limited by the validity of assessment measures</p>
Goals-Based Evaluation	<p>Promotion of teacher involvement and reflective practice</p> <p>Use of multiple data sources as input in the self-evaluation process</p>	<p>Greater time commitment</p> <p>Goals are idiosyncratic and not necessarily related to organizational goals</p> <p>Open-ended in nature and may not withstand legal challenge</p>
Professional Growth Model	<p>Promotion of professionalism and</p>	<p>No accountability to the school</p>



	professional growth  Empowering Individual teacher  Strong formative purpose	No specific connection to organizational goals
Hybrid	Unique combination of strategies to suit multiple purposes and school contexts  Tiered systems can address the differing needs of individuals in the schools	Cumbersome to develop  Difficult to balance different purposes such as personal growth and academic accountability

Table 1 (Stronge & Tucker, 2003).

### *Documenting Performance in Teacher Evaluation*

The literature on teacher performance evaluation reveals that there are numerous ways to collect data for this purpose—some data are collected during formal and informal classroom observations made by administrators or peers, and other data are collected through artifacts of teaching collected and compiled by teachers or administrators through such means as lesson plans, portfolios, journal entries, or the result of action research (Zepeda, 2006). Both research findings and the literature demonstrate that there are numerous ways to collect data through multiple sources. Data sources regarding teacher performance evaluation have included the following methods:

- Student ratings and reports (Aleamoni, 1999; Scriven, 1994)
- Student performance on achievement tests (Bingham, Heywood, & White, 1991; Driscoll, Peterson, Crow, & Larson, 1985; Iwanicki, 1998; Schalock et al., 1993; Soar, Medley, & Coker, 1983; Stronge & Tucker, 2000)
- Student work (Brauchle, Mclarty, & Parker, 1989)
- Rating scales (Manatt & Daniels, 1990)

- Teacher observation (Glickman et al., 1998; McGreal, 1983; Sullivan & Glanz, 2004; Zepeda, 2003)
- Portfolios (St. Maurice & Shaw, 2004; Wolf & Dietz, 1998; Zepeda, 2003)
- Action research (Glanz, 1998, 1999; Sullivan & Glanz, 2000; Zepeda, 2003)
- Goal setting (McGreal, 1983)
- Professional development plans (Holland & Adams, 2002)
- Performance assessments (Stansbury, 1998)
- Competency tests (Popham, 1971, 1984)
- Peer review and/or per evaluation (Bird, 1990; Cederblom & Lounsbury, 1980).

### *Portfolios*

Portfolios are the collection of artifacts (i.e., the collection of written records and documents produced by a teacher as part of his/her job responsibility) that represent the teacher's performance (Stronge & Tucker, 2003). Artifacts that are most often available and easy to produce could include the following: lesson plans, instructional materials, student assessments, forms developed and/or used for record keeping; significant correspondence and memos, schedules, logs or calendars or activities, and evidence of professional development (Stronge & Tucker, 2003).

Tucker, Stronge and Gareis (2002) described the purpose of portfolio to include both low-stakes and high-stakes uses. Low-stakes uses include self-assessment and self-reflection, professional development, teaching training, highlighting exemplary practices and formative evaluation, wherein portfolios may be informal, less structured, and focused primarily on improvement (Tucker, Stronge & Gareis, 2002). High-stakes uses, on the other hand, include initial hiring decisions, teacher certification or licensure,

tenure or other personnel decisions, documentation for remediation, promotions and awards, summative evaluation, pay-for-performance plans, and advanced certification. High-stakes portfolios may be more formal, structured, and focused on accountability (Tucker, Stronge & Gareis, 2002).

Portfolio data can be collected by the teacher. Thus, the portfolio collection and review process becomes a type of structured self-assessment, especially when the reflection about performance, written by the teacher, is included in the portfolio; the materials and information contributed by the teacher to the performance portfolio do not necessarily entail significant additional record-keeping (Stronge & Tucker, 2003).

Although teacher portfolios should reflect a teacher's performance or talents, a portfolio with a heavy emphasis on amount of materials and documents without discrimination as to what is included has what Tucker, Stronge and Gareis (2002) call a "steamer trunk" effect (p. 3). Additionally, Stronge and Tucker (2003) conclude that if a portfolio becomes merely a paper chase, it invariably misses the mark of professional growth and improved performance evaluations.

### *Classroom Observations*

Although, as described earlier, there are many types of ways to evaluate teacher performance, the most *commonly used* type used in schools is classroom observation (Danielson & McGreal, 2000; DiPaola & Hoy, 2008; Lortie, 1975; Peterson, 2000, Scriven, 1973; Stodolsky, 1984). In addition, current school practices reflect the belief that the use of observation is the best data source for evaluation (Danielson & McGreal, 2000; DiPaola & Hoy, 2008; Peterson, 2000; Stronge, 2006). Because observation is the most common model and most familiar and recognizable to teachers, it is briefly

discussed below. Classroom observations take two primary forms—informal and formal. Both aim to provide an administrator the opportunity to obtain a sample of a teacher’s performance in the classroom (Peterson, 2000).

*Informal observations.* Informal observations usually do not include a pre- or post-observation conference. Informal observations are sometimes referred to as “walk-ins, “drop-ins” or “pop-ins” (Zepeda, 2006). The interest of informal observation has heightened recently with the refinement of the Downey Walk-Through, in which administrators make several informal observations per day, spending between three and five minutes in a classroom (Downey, Steffy, English, Frase, & Poston, 2004); there are five key ideas in the Downey Walk-Through:

- Short, focused, yet informal observation
- Possible area for reflection
- Curriculum as well as instructional focus
- Follow-up occurs only on occasion and not after every visit
- Informal and collaborative. (p. 19)

Essentially, informal observations in general are brief and last approximately ten to fifteen minutes; can occur at the beginning, middle or end of a class period; and can be made at any time during the school day (Zepeda, 2003).

*Formal observations.* Formal observations, on the other hand, include the processes of pre- and post-observation conferences and most often follow the clinical model as developed by Cogan (1973) and Goldhammer (1969). Cogan and Goldhammer viewed the method and model of formal observation as a way to provide for ongoing analysis of teaching in the classroom. Although there are numerous variations of this

model currently used in school systems, the clinical model was originally composed of six phases, which have been streamlined into three: the pre-observation conference, the classroom observation, and the post-observation conference.

In the clinical model of formal classroom evaluation, all three phases are conducted as part of the evaluation. The model is cyclical; each phase informs the next. The first part of the process usually involves the teacher informing the administrator what he/she will observe in the classroom during their visit. During the classroom observation, the administrator usually keeps a record of classroom activities and questions and compares this to the pre-observation meeting. After the classroom observation and during the post-observation conference, the teacher and supervisor discuss what was observed (Zepeda, 2006). The purpose of the post-observation conference is for the teacher and supervisor to review the data collected in the observation and then to develop a working plan for ongoing growth and development.

Current school practices reflect the belief that formal observation using the clinical model of supervision is the best data source for evaluation; this model is the most common method for evaluating teachers (Danielson & McGreal, 2000; Peterson, 2000; Stronge, 2006).

Though observation is the most common method of teacher performance evaluation, primary reliance on formal and informal observations in evaluation present significant problems (e.g., contrived situation, very limited sample, only occurs in the classroom) (DiPaola & Hoy, 2008; Peterson, 2000; Stronge, 2006; Zepeda, 2006). Additionally, direct observation provides data on a single aspect of the performance of

teachers—that of their own behaviors in the classroom on a given day and time—not on the impact they make upon students (DiPaola & Hoy, 2008).

*Pitfalls of General Teacher Performance Evaluation Methods*

The literature and research on teacher performance evaluation is clear: it doesn't work well. Danielson and McGreal (2000) described evaluation systems as characterized by top-down communication, in which the only evidence of teacher performance is that collected by an administrator during classroom observation which can lead to one sided communication as well as a subordinate relationship during the process.

Peterson (1984) described a similar problem: teacher evaluation as a highly judgmental process. He identified the current common practice of “discrepancy” in which teacher quality is recognized by differences between an a priori ideal—a list of some behaviors, characteristics, duties, attitudes, outcomes, preparation, and/or experiences—and evidence about the actual teacher under review (Peterson, 2000, p. 40). Thus a standard of good teaching is defined and all teachers are compared to it. Those teachers most closely corresponding to the ideal are considered to be of the highest quality. As described earlier, discrepancy, or observation, is most widely recognized form of evaluation in the public school system (Henniger, 2002). However, observation, though it is the most common form and/or practice of teacher evaluation, may not be the best way to evaluate teachers. Peterson (2000) stated:

Seventy years of empirical research on teacher evaluation show that current practices (administrator observation) do not improve teachers or accurately tell what happens in classrooms. Current procedures do not reward exemplary

teachers. Despite obvious and longstanding problems, school districts continue to rely on principal reports (administrative observations). (p.18)

In addition to empirical research studies that show the statistical inaccuracy of principal ratings, interview and questionnaire studies of teachers and administrators indicate extremely low levels of respect for the procedures within the profession (Peterson, 2000). As early as 1973, Wolf found that teachers “believe that the standards for evaluating are too vague and too ambiguous to be worth anything” (p. 160). Lortie (1975) found that only seven percent of his interviewees saw judgments by their organization superiors as the most appropriate source of information to indicate performance success. In 1984, the RAND corporation study found that administrators considered teacher evaluation a “necessary evil or a time-consuming chore” (p. 22).

Johnson (1990) interviewed 115 teachers and found that “teachers roundly criticized formal supervision and evaluation practices” (p.266). In addition, Johnson (1990) found that administrators focused on orderly performances of the evaluations procedures as opposed to the content of those evaluations. Another problem identified by teachers in the Johnson (1990) study was the rating forms, which left teachers confused when administrators evaluated items such as “professional demeanor” without the use of descriptions or further explanation (p. 268). The main dissatisfaction of teachers with administrators as evaluators was what the teachers saw as a basic lack of competence on the part of administrators to evaluate subject matter (Johnson, 1990).

Direct observation fails to provide information about the teacher’s expectations or intentions, the teacher’s planning, or how materials are chosen and selected to match to students and objectives. Observations provide a limited perspective on long-range

instructional continuity or day-to-day versatility; the teacher's involvement in the life of the school, the community, and the profession are unlikely to be evaluated directly (Cangelosi, 1991).

Traditional assessments appear to reinforce superior-subordinate managerial relationships in which the evaluator stands outside the process and makes judgments about the teacher (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Peterson, 2000). A manager-oriented evaluation system affords teachers little voice in the analysis of their own practice. In addition, such a system may serve to circumscribe the construction of knowledge and to foster a monologue instead of a dialogue in the evaluation process.

Tucker (1997) described "the crux of the problem" as being principal's inflated self-ratings of their understanding of teacher evaluation (p. 104). Regardless of the assessments of outside observers and evaluation experts about the factors that enable or disable effective evaluation, the beliefs and attitudes of principals themselves about these factors as well as their beliefs about their own skills and abilities are likely to impact substantially the effective implementation of evaluation policies (Painter, 2000). Lastly, reliance on administrators as the central evaluator leads to sociological domination, which in turn detracts from teacher functioning and morale (Peterson, 2000).

Principals face serious role conflicts when they have the tasks both of educational leaders of professionals and summative judges of teachers (Cusick, 1973; Lortie, 1975; Peterson, 2000). Administrator reports are not always the best objective evidence available; systematic parent surveys, pupil reports, peer reviews, pupil achievement data, standardized achievement tests, and documentation of professional activity all routinely are more reliable than principal reports (Peterson, 2000). Finally, administrators may not



have been selected for their role because they were themselves the best classroom teachers (Peterson, 2000). Further studies, listed below by consecutive year, reveal a myriad of teacher evaluation issues, as seen in Table 1.

Table 2: Current Evaluation Practices and Comment

<b>Commentary Regarding Current Evaluation</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Year</b>
Teachers see nothing to be gained from evaluation, p. 160.	Wolf	1973
Teacher evaluation is a disaster. The practices are shoddy, and the principles are unclear, p. 244.	Scriven	1981
If a school can justify evaluating all teachers through identical procedures, then the school is probably devoid of innovations, p. 22.	Travers	1981
Evaluators are mistaken if they assume they are observing the typical behavior of a teacher with the usual evaluation procedure, p. 17.	Stodolsky	1984
Principals lacked sufficient resolve and competence to evaluate accurately, p. 22.	Wise et al	1984
Almost all educational personnel decisions are based on judgments which, according to the research, are only slightly more accurate than they would be if they were based on pure chance, p. 243.	Medley & Coker	1987
An approach based on this kind of (classroom observation based) research cannot be a legitimate method of teacher evaluation, p. 9.	Scriven	1987
Current teacher evaluation procedures do not distinguish contributions made to minority students, especially by minority teachers. In fact, conventional evaluation underestimates their importance to the educational system, p. 134.	Peterson, Deyhle & Watkins	1988
Teachers regard the practice as an institutional obligation to be endured rather than an opportunity to be seized, p. 266.	Johnson	1990
In most school district, the norms and expectations that surround teacher evaluation preclude a meaningful activity, p. 404.	McLaughlin	1990
Teachers and administrators alike lack technical expertise and awareness of...evaluation processes, p. 177	Peterson & Chenoweth	1992
People who do have a vision of improved teacher evaluation tend to offer simplistic solutions for the rather complicated technical and sociological problems, p. 30.	Peterson	2000
The complexity of professional roles in today's schools	Tucker, Stronge &	2002

requires a performance evaluation that reflects that complexity, p. 56	Gareis	
An attractive alternative is to use student achievement (for evaluating teachers); however, researchers still must sort out how much measured student achievement reflects the performance of the teachers and how much it reflects family and other influences, p. 70	Hanushek & Rivkin	2007

Table 2.

Table 2 reveals a variety of pitfalls, problems and concerns unearthed in the literature regarding teacher evaluation. The pitfalls that all teachers face are the same ones that theatre arts teachers face. Combine these pitfalls with subject matter that is unique, such as the theatre arts, and effective evaluation can become even more elusive. The following section addresses how these pitfalls and other issues effect the evaluation of theatre arts teachers.

#### *Current Methods for Evaluating Theatre Arts Teachers*

In order to understand how current general methods and models of teacher performance evaluation effect theatre arts teachers, it is important to review a brief history of theatre arts in the classroom. The history of theatre education explains the nature of the changes that have taken place in theatre education. It also explains the complex nature of theatre itself.

#### *A Brief History of Theatre Arts Teachers*

Hobgood (1987) explained that one of the reasons that theatre is so difficult to teach and therefore even more difficult to evaluate is the broad range of subject matters it includes. When the dramatic arts entered American education early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, programs dealt with selected parts of this range (Hobgood, 1987). As the teaching field became more widely established, more and more of the extraordinary diversity of theatre found its way into curricula. Currently, the variety of studies conducted by theatre

programs has reached an extent beyond the ambitions of the pioneers of theatre education (Hobgood, 1987).

At the beginnings of theatre in American education, activities were voluntary and extracurricular; the academic units sponsoring the activities considered that theatre enhanced and illuminated their intellectual fields, especially through play production. In one recent study, it was found that though only a small percentage of the schools reported that the theatre arts were taught directly, more than fifty percent said that classroom teachers integrated dramatic arts into their curricula in other subject areas to facilitate students' learning. The teachers had enough awareness of the importance of theatre to incorporate it into their teaching methods (Burton, Horowitz, & Abeles, 2000).

Early in American theatre education, as student interest and demand led to the introduction of theatre classes for credit, instruction consisted primarily of survey courses or the study of aspects of theatre practice in which faculty had expertise. A consensus then held that the most desirable teacher in a theatre program would be one who was well versed in the literature, history, and practice of the stage—in a word, a 'generalist' (Hobgood, 1987).

After World War II, the number of theatre programs at all levels grew (Brockett, 2007). Expectations of theatre curricula widened and deepened, especially in colleges and universities. Demands for stronger secondary education programs increased to meet these expectations. Administrators found their programs criticized if they did not treat all important aspects of theatre with the result that more and more educational institutions authorized enlarged curricula with highly specific instruction. The generalists, who had been expected to conduct instruction in several areas, now had to focus their attention on

one or two subjects. The most desirable teacher then became the one trained and tested through professional experience to deal with a narrowing segment of theatre—in a word, a ‘specialist’ (Hobgood, 1987).

The Educational Theatre Association (1991) mounted a national study of theatre education in schools across the country and a variety of information was collected regarding theatre in the public schools. Researchers surveyed random sample of schools with eleventh and twelfth grades and total school enrollments of three hundred or more. The sample was geographically representative and included rural, suburban, and urban schools and a cross-section of school types (Educational Theatre Association, 1991).

Theatre activities were shown to be common in U.S. high schools with 88% reporting either one or more theatre courses, or co-curricular theatre productions or both; of these, 59% offered both credit theatre courses and co-curricular theatre activities. About nine out of ten theatre programs mounted a production annually (Educational Theatre Association, 1991).

Program funding was generally derived from a combination of school and outside sources such as ticket sales, fundraising events, and advertising. Principals reported that arts programs accounted for an average of 6% of the schools’ total budgets, and theatre programs received about 1% of the total. Budgets for theatre programs averaged approximately \$4,000 with more than half budgeting \$2,000 or less per year (Education Theatre Association, 1991).

In the area of teaching, the typical theatre teacher had an average of fourteen years teaching experience and slightly more than a decade of teaching theatre. Theatre

teachers did not generally teach theatre exclusively. Six out of ten teachers reported that theatre was a secondary assignment for them (Educational Theatre Association, 1991). Theatre arts teacher certification varied from state to state and in 1991, there were only twenty states that required theatre education certification, including: Arizona, Colorado, Georgia, Idaho, Kansas, Maryland, Massachusetts, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin. School systems that required high school theatre or some combination of theatre and speech was three-fifths (Educational Theatre Association, 1991). States that required a combination of theatre and English or speech certification included twelve: Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Oklahoma, South Carolina and Wyoming (Educational Theatre Association, 1991). In another study, it was found that certification for theatre arts teachers was not available in many states and that there were limited in-service opportunities for theatre arts teachers (Wheatley, 1990).

#### *Theatre Education Best Practice*

More recent trends of educational practice in the last two decades have included best practices approaches to teaching which is grounded in the work of Zemelman, Daniels and Hyde (1998). The term was borrowed from the legal and medical professions to describe solid, reputable, state-of-the-art work in a field (Zemelman, Daniels & Hyde, 1998). A practitioner of best practice can be described as one who follows the best practice standards, is aware of current research, and consistently offers clients the full benefits of the latest knowledge, technology and procedures (Zemelman, Daniels & Hyde, 1998).

Lazarus (2004) took the idea of best practice and applied it to theatre education. Through a qualitative study that included more than one hundred theatre education teachers, she developed an umbrella for what best practices include in theatre education. Her ideas evolved into what she termed as: Characteristics of Best Practice in Theatre Education (Lazarus, 2004, p. 9) and they include three major strands:

- **Learner-Centered Classroom and Production Work:** The students' place at the center of the learning process is acknowledged, valued, and nurtured. Learning together, students and teacher pose questions, investigate and consider ideas from multiple perspectives, and reflect on discoveries. Content is correlated with familiar ideas, lived experiences, and relevant social issues. There is shared decision-making and individual and collective action. Dialogue, collaboration, risk-taking, and experimentation are hallmarks of this practice (Lazarus, 2004; Zemelman, Daniels & Hyde, 1998).
- **Socially Responsible Practice:** Students learn in, through, and about theatre as members of society and as citizens of the school and the world. Material studied and produced is relevant to students and their communities and is developmentally appropriate. Students and adults show respect for each other, the program, and the art form in all formal and informal communications and interactions. The program is physically, academically, and socially accessible to all students in the school regardless of age, race, religion, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, physical ability, or disability (Lazarus, 2004).

- Comprehensive Theatre Education: Instruction is holistic, authentic, and allows students to learn and practice collaboratively in the roles of actor, director, playwright, designer, technician, critic, researcher, and audience. Curricular and co-curricular work intertwines production, history, criticism, and aesthetics. Integration of theatre study and practice takes place across arts disciplines, in other subjects, and in the school and community (Lazarus, 2004).

These three characteristics overlap and intersect in many ways within an effective theatre program. Lazarus (2004) also noted that many teachers make conscious connections between the work in their theatre classes and their production (i.e., their after-school theatre programs). While all of the teachers produce plays, some teachers had production classes solely for making those connections. Some had sequential classes such as Theatre I, II, and III, as well as a separate production class. Whatever the individual configuration of production and classes, these teachers recognized that they were always teaching (Lazarus, 2004). To unify their programs, they incorporate improvisation and acting exercises, research, design, theatre technology, audition techniques, stage management, rehearsal etiquette, and work with text, voice, and movement into classes *and* after school rehearsals (Lazarus, 2004).

In a comprehensive theatre program, most theatre teachers in the Lazarus (2004) study rather than separate instructional units about acting, play analysis, or lighting, instead combined these aspects of their instruction into a more comprehensive curriculum. The teachers she interviewed engaged their students in learning theatre history, production, and criticism simultaneously; the students created original work and

talked easily about the style, its historical roots, its meaning, and the art and craft necessary for its creation (Lazarus, 2004).

In many schools, the arts teachers talk and work together, developing curricula and pursuing joint projects. Some theatre teachers integrate their curricula with teachers from other academic departments. Lazarus (2004) describes comprehensive theatre education as an interwoven study and exploration of all aspects of theatre which encompasses a core of holistic study of the theatre disciplines, expanding and intersecting with work across other arts disciplines and academic areas. A comprehensive theatre program that encompasses all of the disciplines inherent in theatre is also described as Discipline-Based Theatre Education.

#### *Discipline-Based Theatre Education (DBTE)*

Discipline-Based Theatre Education was developed for the Southeast Center for Education in Theatre (which is based out of the SCEA or the Southeastern Institute for Education in the Arts), a nationally recognized center for professional development located at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. SCEA was prompted in this move by the development of Discipline-Based Art Education (DBAE) initiated in 1985 by the Getty Center for Education in Arts.

Discipline-Based Theatre Education (DTBE) is a comprehensive approach to teaching and learning that contributes to the creation, understanding, and appreciation of theatre. It proposes a process-centered exploration of theatre from the various perspectives of the researcher, playwright, director, designer technician, actor, audience, and critic. The concepts, processes, and values inherent in theatre are studied and explored through four main methods of inquiry: production, history, aesthetics, and



criticism (Southeast Institute for Education in Theatre, 1996). These interrelated approaches provide a variety of strategies for experiencing, understanding, reflecting upon, and valuing works of theatre and the theatre process as seen in Diagram 1 (Southeast Institute for Education in Theatre, 1996).

Diagram 1: (Southeast Institute for Education in Theatre, 1996)

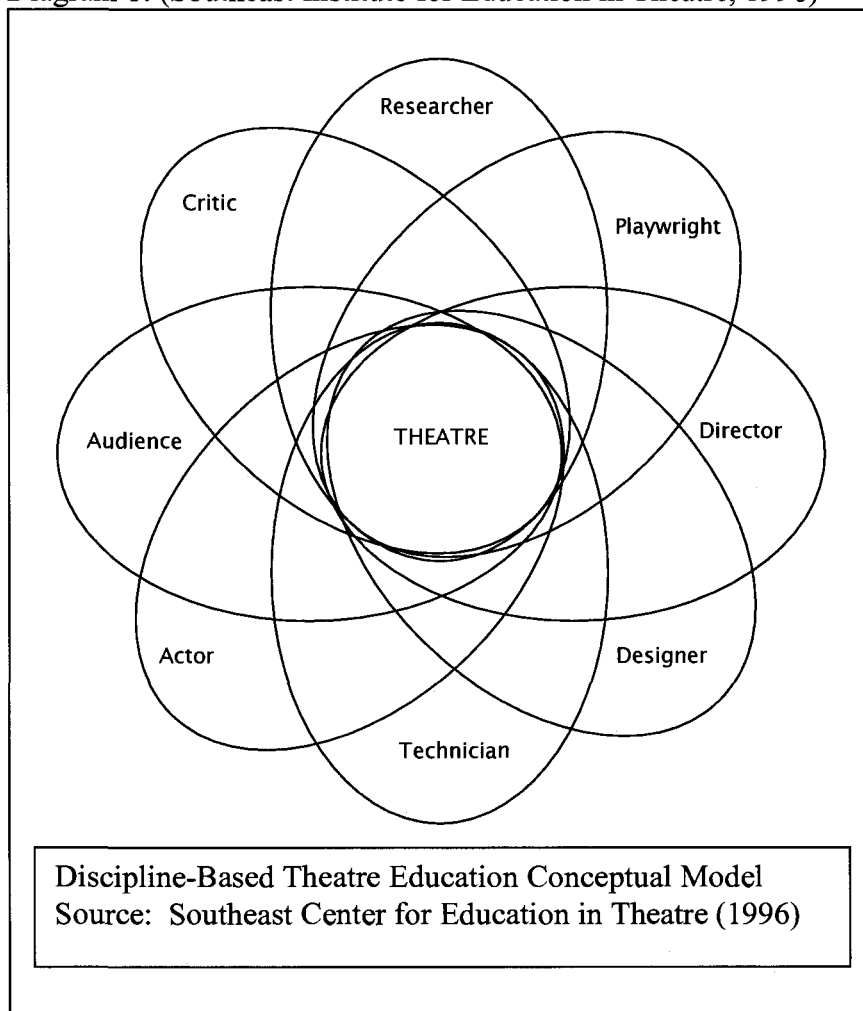


Diagram 1.

This history of theatre in education has left its mark on current theatre education practices and now administrators, who are faced with the challenge of evaluation, must be able to understand what is best practice for theatre teachers when it comes to evaluating and providing students with feedback that encourages student progress and

measures student achievement as well as use a variety of assessments and content knowledge to plan appropriate instruction. Is the theatre teacher a generalist or a specialist? Do they use a D-BTE approach to teaching theatre? Are these teachers certified to teach theatre? If administrators do not understand these aspects of the craft of theatre, how can they evaluate the teacher appropriately?

### *Pitfalls of Theatre Arts Teachers Performance Evaluation*

Traditional approaches to the evaluation of teachers have to date failed to supply administrators with enough comprehensive information needed to make important educational decisions about theatre arts teachers (Maranzano, 2000). Evaluation instruments typically used for teacher evaluation nationwide do not transfer well to the complex and specialized world of performing arts instruction, including theatre arts (Grant & Drafall, 1991; Taebel, 1990a, 1990b). Many common evaluation systems actually hinder a creative teacher's risk-taking and self-reflecting behaviors (Johnson, 1990), ingredients considered critical to the creative world of fine and performing arts instruction. While issues surrounding ineffective personnel evaluation are apparent throughout the research on the topic, they are accentuated in fields requiring specialized training, such as those in the performing arts, including theatre arts.

Good and Mulryan (1990) stated that a majority of commonly used evaluation instruments failed to recognize the multidimensional nature of theatre arts teaching practices and school contexts. Henniger (2002) stated that the nature of the observation itself is very different for those who have experience in a particular subject. Observers who have been formally trained in a given skill, for example, often respond differently to observations of the performance of that skill than those who have not received formal

training (Henniger, 2002). Combine the pitfalls of current evaluations practices described above with the challenges of a unique subject matter, such as the performing arts (theatre), and teacher performance evaluation would seem almost impossible.

It would seem that evaluating a theatre arts teacher becomes much more effective if that teacher were evaluated through the eyes of an administrator who has been formally trained in the (performing) arts. Of course, this is not possible in most cases, but, according to Henniger (2002), the complete absence of having any arts background makes evaluation next to impossible. Stronge (2006) stated that evaluators focus attention on their own personal interests; thus, what they notice reflects their personal interests. It is true that all teaching environments share important characteristics, and that a thoughtful and well-trained observer can recognize these characteristics (or their absence) in a variety of settings. But knowledge of content, of content-related pedagogy, and the approaches to learning displayed by students at different developmental levels are highly relevant to teaching. Teachers may well be more knowledgeable in these matters than the administrator who evaluates their performance; this fact undermines the evaluation process, contributing to the perception that it has little value (Danielson & McGreal, 2000). How many administrators have been introduced to breathing techniques used for stage and screen, stage diction or Stanislavsky's "method" of acting? This is where the evaluation of theatre arts teachers can be difficult. How can administrators who do not know how the craft of theatre is taught evaluate theatre teachers in action?

Eisner (2005) called this level of observation connoisseurship and likens it to what a wine connoisseur experiences when experiencing a variety of wines; a connoisseur in education is deeply familiar with skills that others possess and can

understand and articulate the subtleties of a teacher at work, especially in the arts and can observe and detect specific skills that make that teacher excellent. Eisner (2005) stated:

To be a connoisseur...means being able to discriminate the subtleties among types...by drawing upon a gustatory, visual, kinesthetic memory against which the particulars of the present may be placed for purposes of comparison and contrast. Connoisseurs of anything appreciate what they encounter in the proper meaning of that word. Appreciation here means an awareness and an understanding of what one has experienced. Such awareness provides the basis for judgment. (p. 40)

Eisner's (2005) connoisseurship of educational evaluation would require that those who are in the position of having to judge or evaluate would need to possess the skills that are required to have awareness of the subject as well, especially fine and performing arts educators. If the teaching the arts requires a complex skill set, then evaluating teachers of the fine arts would require a set of similar complex skills, if not more, once the assessment process is added to the equation.

Teacher evaluation is a complex undertaking due to the multifaceted and complex concepts underlying the assessment process; state mandated evaluation systems historically have been designed to primarily check for general teaching competencies that are assumed to be applicable to all teachers across all disciplines. When state legislature determines the generic criteria for teacher competencies, there appears to exist an underlying assumption that all subjects are taught in the same manner (Loup, et al., 1996).

Finally, current practices dismiss the contributions to the instructional program that occur outside of the context of the classroom (Good & Mulryan, 1990). These extensions may include dramatic presentations, student participation in academic conferences and performances. These activities occur beyond the regular school schedule and serve as a valuable learning experience. Many new experiences that are not covered in a classroom setting are experienced in after school activities. These varied learning experiences reflect new partnerships, arrangements, and interactions with the communities that schools serve including participation with a variety of business interests and service organizations (Maranzano, 2000). Stronge and Tucker (2003) noted that teacher performance evaluation systems that do not include teacher responsibilities outside the classroom are not balanced. This is especially true in the case of theatre teachers whose assignments are not totally based in classroom instruction and related tasks. Stronge and Tucker (2003) identified several key concerns which included:

- Limited performance evidence;
- Artificial nature of observation (*in* and *outside* of the classroom);
- Classroom responsibilities only;
- Process, not product; and finally,
- Inspection approach to evaluation. (p. 54)

Limited performance evidence is of special concern to theatre teachers, whose major performance responsibilities fall outside of the regular school schedule. These major responsibilities can include theatre conferences, major productions and competition pieces. Classroom visits, even three or four visits per year for a full hour each, typically represent less than one-half of one percent of the actual teaching performance (Stronge &

Tucker, 2003). Add this to the many hours of rehearsal and performance time outside of the classroom and the percentage is likely less than one half of one percent. Additionally, the complexity of theatre teachers' roles (in rehearsal and performances) requires that they spend many hours beyond what would some would consider classroom responsibilities. These hours do not include other responsibilities that most teachers share beyond classroom instruction hours: communicating with parents, and reflecting multiple aspects of professionalism (Stronge & Tucker, 2003).

The artificial nature of observation is another concern as it fails to capture the nature of what occurs both inside and outside of the classroom (Stronge & Tucker, 2003). Combine this to what is being learned and accomplished in a setting such as a rehearsal or performance and many additional opportunities for evaluation could be lost. Part of teaching--and by extension student learning--in the arts is the process of rehearsal and performance. Gardner (2004) stated that:

...focusing on performance immediately marks the an important shift (in learning): instead of mastering content, one thinks about the reasons *why* a particular content is being taught and how best to display one's comprehensions of that content in a publicly accessible way. (p.161)

In addition, observation tends to measure specific teaching processes; however, it does not reflect teaching/performance results (Stronge & Tucker, 2003). Many theatre teachers participate in competitive venues in which results are reported. Many theatre teachers are also required to incorporate seasonal performances during after school hours that are open to the public for a small fee or donation. If schools are not producing adequate entertainment for the public, ticket sales can decline. These are just two

instances in which results can be reported and yet neither of these instances are observed or considered in most teacher performance evaluation practices.

While observation does provide insight into some aspects of teaching, it is, nonetheless, an inspection model in which the evaluator passes judgment on the teaching performance (Stronge & Tucker, 2003). Thus it tends to deemphasize the professionalism of teacher. Professionalism of theatre teachers can reach well beyond the school and into the community and can include interactions with the business community and service organizations and other theatre programs in neighboring schools. These relationships with the community exist through financial contracts, competitions and as potential future audiences. All of these are important relationships for theatre teachers to foster in order to create and sustain successful theatre programs.

Limited performance evidence, responsibilities beyond the regular school day, the artificial nature of observation, considering the process as well as the product and the limitations of a brief inspection approach to evaluation are all important issues to consider beyond the classroom in the evaluation of theatre teachers. These issues are important because many theatre teachers spend additional hours in rehearsal and performance in order to sustain theatre programming as well as to meet the requirements of their employment contracts.

#### *Studies in Evaluating Theatre Arts Teachers*

To date, there have been no significant studies regarding evaluating theatre arts teachers. Salazar (1996) collected information across the country on theatre arts educator performance evaluation. She collected information from eleven states (California, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, Ohio

and Pennsylvania). Information for Virginia, which would be applicable to this study and to which the Guidelines for Uniform Performance Standards and Evaluation Criteria for Teachers, Administrators, and Superintendents (Stronge, et al., 2001) would apply, was not collected because as Salazar stated: “(respondents revealed that) there was no special evaluation in their schools for theatre teachers” (Salazar, 1996, p. 28).

Of the other states surveyed, Salazar found that many of the schools did not have or require state certification for theatre teachers and that many of them fell under the speech communication model of certification. Of the eleven states who responded, not a single one used an evaluation system for the fine and performing arts (including theatre arts). In New York, a music specialist handles all of the arts. In North Carolina, “there had been some talk of developing projects in evaluations of teachers that grow out of state guidelines, but interest has waned” (Salazar, 1996, p. 29).

The other states had similar statements to make regarding teacher performance evaluation of theatre teachers. Not one had a system in place and every local district in each area oversaw evaluation without developing and applying those standards for specialized disciplines, such as theatre. The survey, though small due to lack of information that was available, speaks volumes to the problems that theatre teachers face in receiving proper performance evaluation.

*The Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation*

The Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (2007) define personnel evaluation as:



the systematic assessment of a person's performance and/or qualifications in relation to a professional role and some specified and defensible institutional purpose. (p. 2)

A standard is defined as:

a principle mutually agreed to by people engaged in the professional practice, that if met, will enhance the quality and fairness of that professional practice, which in the present case is personnel evaluation. (p. 2)

Additionally, they identified distinct purposes for the standards of personnel evaluation:

1. Guiding promotion and tenure decisions;
2. Recognizing and rewarding meritorious contributions;
3. Assessing the quality of service and production;
4. Identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the evaluatees to help them discover where they need improvement;
5. Prescribing remediation goals and in-service education and training, and;
6. When remediation efforts fail, developing a fair, valid, and effective case for terminating those whose performance is ineffective and does not contribute to the effectiveness of the educational system and the well-being of its students.

(p. 6)

The Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (2007) further delineated that personnel evaluation conform to the following standards: propriety, utility, feasibility, and accuracy. The standards do not specify procedures to be used in personnel evaluation, for example, specific assessment methods, data processing, and data analysis. Rather, the Standards provide a framework for designing, conducting, and

judging personnel evaluations and systems (Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 2007). Propriety Standards are intended to ensure that a personnel evaluation will be conducted legally, ethically, and with due regard for the welfare of the evaluatee and those involved in the evaluation. The Utility Standards are intended to guide evaluations so that they will be informative, timely, and influential. The Feasibility Standards are intended to guide personnel evaluation systems to ensure ease of implementation, efficiency in use of time and resources, adequacy of funding, and viability from a political standpoint (Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 2007). The Accuracy Standards determine whether an evaluation produces sound information. Personnel evaluations must be technically adequate and as complete as possible to allow sound judgments and decisions to be made. The evaluation methodology should be appropriate for the purpose of the evaluation and the evaluatees being evaluated and the context in which they work (Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 2007).

Table 3: Joint Committee Standards Definitions

<p><b>Propriety Standards</b> The Propriety Standards are intended to ensure that a personnel evaluation will be conducted legally, ethically, and with due regard for the welfare of the evaluatee and those involved in the evaluation.</p>
<p>P1 Service Orientation. Personnel evaluations should promote sound education, fulfillment of institutional missions, and effective performance of job responsibilities, so that the educational needs of students, community, and society are met.</p>
<p>P2 Appropriate Policies and Procedures. Guidelines for personnel evaluations should be recorded and provided to the evaluatee in policy statements, negotiated agreements, and/or personnel evaluation manuals, so that evaluations are consistent, equitable, and fair.</p>
<p>P3 Access to Evaluation Information. Access to evaluation information should be limited the persons with established legitimate permission to review and use the information, so that confidentiality is maintained and privacy protected.</p>

P4 Interactions with Evaluatees. The evaluator should respect human dignity and act in a professional, considerate, and courteous manner, so that the evaluatee's self-esteem, motivation, professional reputations, performance, and attitude toward personnel evaluation are enhanced or, at least, not needlessly damaged.

P5 Balanced Evaluation. Personnel evaluations should provide information that identifies both strengths and weaknesses, so that strengths can be built upon and weaknesses addressed.

P6 Conflict of Interest. Existing and potential conflicts of interest should be identified and dealt with openly and honestly, so that they do not compromise the evaluation process and results.

P7 Legal Viability. Personnel evaluations should meet the requirements of all federal, state, and local laws, as well as case law, contracts, collective bargaining agreements, affirmative action policies, and local board policies and regulations or institutional statutes or bylaws, so that evaluators can successfully conduct fair, efficient, and responsible personnel evaluations.

### **Utility Standards**

The Utility Standards are intended to guide evaluations so that they will be informative, timely, and influential.

U1 Constructive Orientation. Personnel evaluations should be constructive, so that they not only help institutions develop human resources but encourage and assist those evaluated to provide excellent services in accordance with the institution's mission statements and goals.

U2 Defined Uses. Both the users and intended uses of a personnel evaluation should be identified at the beginning of the evaluation so that the evaluation can address appropriate questions and issues.

U3 Evaluator Qualifications. The evaluation system should be developed, implemented, and managed by persons with the necessary qualifications, skills, training, and authority, so that evaluation reports are properly conducted, respected and used.

U4 Explicit Criteria. Evaluators should identify and justify the criteria used to interpret and judge evaluatee performance, so that the basis for interpretation and judgment provide a clear and defensible rationale for results.

U5 Functional Reporting. Reports should be clear, timely, accurate, and germane, so that they are of practical value to the evaluatee and other appropriate audiences.

U6 Professional Development. Personnel evaluations should inform users and evaluatees of areas in need of professional development, so that all educational personnel can better address the institution's missions and goals, fulfill their roles and responsibilities, and meet the needs of students.

### **Feasibility Standards**

The Feasibility Standards are intended to guide personnel evaluation systems so that they are as easy to implement as possible, efficient in their use of time and resources, adequately funded, and viable from a political standpoint.

F1 Practical Procedures. Personnel evaluation procedures should be practical, so that they produce the needed information in efficient, non-disruptive ways.
F2 Political Viability. Personnel evaluations should be planned and conducted with the anticipation of questions from evaluatees and others with a legitimate right to know, so that their questions can be addressed and their cooperation obtained.
F3 Fiscal Viability. Adequate time and resources should be provided for personnel evaluation activities, so that evaluation can be effectively implemented, the results fully communicated, and appropriate follow-up activities identified.
<b>Accuracy Standards</b>
The accuracy standards determine whether an evaluation has produced sound information. Personnel evaluations must be technically adequate and as complete as possible to allow sound judgments and decisions to be made. The evaluation methodology should be appropriate for the purpose of the evaluation and the evaluatees being evaluated and the context in which they work.
A1 Validity Orientation. The selection, development, and implementation of personnel evaluations should ensure that the interpretations made about the performance of the evaluatee are valid and not open to misinterpretation.
A2 Defined Expectations. The qualifications, role, and performance expectations of the evaluatee should be clearly defined, so that the evaluator can determine the evaluation data and information needed to ensure validity.
A3 Analysis of Context. Contextual variables that influence performance should be identified, described, and recorded, so that they can be considered when interpreting an evaluatee's performance.
A4 Documented Purposes and Procedures. The evaluation purposes and procedures, both planned and actual, should be documented, so that they can be clearly explained and justified.
A5 Defensible Information. The information collected for personnel evaluations should be defensible, so that the information can be reliably and validly interpreted.
A6 Reliable Information. Personnel evaluation procedures should be chosen or developed and implemented to assure reliability, so that the information obtained will provide consistent indications of the evaluatee's performance.
A7 Systematic Data Control. The information collected, processed, and reported about evaluatees should be systematically reviewed, corrected as appropriate, and kept secure, so that accurate judgments about the evaluatee's performance can be made and appropriate levels of confidentiality maintained.
A8 Bias Identification and Management. Personnel evaluations should be free of bias, so that interpretations of the evaluatee's qualifications or performance are valid.
A9 Analysis of Information. The information collected for personnel evaluations should be systematically and accurately analyzed, so that the purposes of the evaluation are effectively achieved.
A10 Justified Conclusions. The evaluative conclusions about the evaluatee's performance should be explicitly justified, so that evaluatees and others with a legitimate right to know can have confidence in them.

A11 Metaevaluation. Personnel evaluation systems should be examined periodically using these and other appropriate standards, so that mistakes are prevented or detected and promptly corrected, and sound personnel evaluation practices are developed and maintained over time.

Table 3 (Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 2007).

Table 4: Personnel Evaluation Standards Applied to Teacher Evaluation

<b>Standards</b>	<b>Description of the Standards</b>	<b>Application to Teacher Evaluation</b>
Propriety Standards	Evaluations should be legal, ethical, and conducted with concern for both the welfare of the teachers and their clients.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written policy inclusive of criteria and procedures</li> <li>• Job-related evaluation criteria</li> <li>• Prior notification before evaluation begins</li> <li>• Legal compatibility with statutory mandates</li> <li>• Equitable treatment of all teachers</li> </ul>
Utility Standards	Evaluations should be offered in a timely manner, useful format, and with information that the teacher can use to improve performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detailed and focused feedback that enhances instruction for children</li> <li>• Constructive suggestions that allow sufficient time for improvement</li> <li>• Process promotes growth</li> </ul>
Feasibility Standards	Evaluation systems must be reasonable to use in terms of the time and resources required to conduct the evaluation, in addition to providing valuable feedback.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practical procedures for both teachers and administrators</li> <li>• Perception of meaningful evaluation as a priority for the school system, with adequate support</li> </ul>
Accuracy Standards	Information collected during the evaluation must be valid and precise in order to draw conclusions about job performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written documentation of all communications regarding performance</li> <li>• Recommendations based on patterns of behavior</li> <li>• Substantiation for personnel recommendations that are made</li> </ul>

Table 4 (Stronge & Tucker, 2003).

While the Standards don't provide actual procedures or forms for teacher evaluation, they do provide guidance developing or implementing valid and reliable personnel evaluation systems (Howard & Sanders, 2006).

Table 5: Linking Standard Statements to Key Questions of Teacher Evaluations

Attribute	Standard Statement	Key Questions
<b>PROPRIETY</b>	<p><b>P 1—SERVICE ORIENTATION</b> Personnel evaluations should promote sound education of all students, fulfillment of institutional missions, and effective performance of job responsibilities of educators.</p>	<p>Are job descriptions clearly written and understood by both evaluatees and evaluators? Are these job expectations aligned with district goals and sound educational practice?</p>
	<p><b>P2 – APPROPRIATE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES</b> Guidelines for personnel evaluations should be recorded and provided to evaluatees in policy statements, negotiated agreements, and/or personnel evaluation manuals.</p>	<p>Are written policies regarding all aspects of teacher evaluation written, adopted by governing boards, and available to all teachers and evaluators as well as other stakeholders? Is there an oversight of the process to ensure consistency and fairness of judgment of the evaluator?</p>
	<p><b>P3—ACCESS TO EVALUATION INFORMATION</b> To maintain confidentiality, access to evaluation reports should be limited to the persons with established legitimate permission to review and use the information.</p>	<p>Is the information gathered during an evaluation protected and held confidential? Is there a process in place to ensure that only those with a legitimate purpose have access to personnel evaluations?</p>
	<p><b>P4—INTERACTIONS WITH EVALUATEES</b> The evaluator should respect human dignity and act in a professional, considerate, and courteous manner.</p>	<p>Are there safeguards and oversights in place to ensure that evaluators conduct all interactions (both written and verbal) in a professional, constructive manner? Is there a process in place to address incidences of unprofessional interactions with evaluatees?</p>
	<p><b>P5 - COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION</b> Personnel evaluations should provide information that identifies both strengths and weaknesses, so that strengths can be built upon and problem areas addressed.</p>	<p>Do procedures and expectations allow the identification of strengths and weaknesses rather than focusing solely on the deficits of performance? Are the ratings conducive to differentiating among levels of performance?</p>
	<p><b>P6—CONFLICT OF INTEREST</b> Existing and potential conflicts of interest should be identified and dealt with openly and honestly.</p>	<p>Are there safeguards and oversights in place to ensure that preexisting conditions or events would not compromise the evaluator's ability to be fair and unbiased?</p>

	<p><b>P7—LEGAL VIABILITY</b> Personnel evaluations should meet the requirements of all federal, state, and local laws, as well as case law, contracts, collective bargaining agreements, affirmative action policies, and local board or institutional policies.</p>	<p>Does the evaluation process meet all federal, state, and local laws and guidelines including those established through collective bargaining? Do all those involved generally agree that the evaluations are fair and efficient?</p>
UTILITY	<p><b>U1—CONSTRUCTIVE ORIENTATION</b> Personnel evaluations should be constructive, so that they not only help institutions develop human resources but encourage and assist those evaluated to provide excellent services in accordance with the institution's mission statements and goals.</p>	<p>Does the evaluation process reflect the institution's goals and mission? Is a process in place that aligns feedback and professional development based on evaluation with the institution's goals and mission?</p>
	<p><b>U2—DEFINED USES</b> Both the users and intended uses of a personnel evaluation should be identified at the beginning of the evaluation.</p>	<p>Have <i>all</i> users (teacher, administrators, School Board members, etc.) of the evaluation process been clearly identified from the beginning of the evaluation cycle? Have the uses for the information (dismissal, tenure, merit pay, etc.) been clearly identified?</p>
	<p><b>U3—EVALUATOR QUALIFICATIONS</b> The evaluation system should be developed, implemented, and managed by persons with the necessary qualifications, skills, training, and authority.</p>	<p>Have all the evaluators received appropriate training in the evaluation process? Have those who manage the records received appropriate training and hold appropriate credentials?</p>
	<p><b>U4—EXPLICIT CRITERIA</b> Systems of evaluation should have clear specific criteria directly related to the required job expectations of the evaluatees?</p>	<p>Do the criteria reflect only the job expectations of those evaluated? Are criteria for one group used for another group with unrelated job expectations (i.e., an evaluation for teachers used for guidance counselors?)</p>
	<p><b>U5—FUNCTIONAL REPORTING</b> Reports should be clear, timely, accurate, and germane.</p>	<p>Is there a system of oversight to ensure that all reports generated by the evaluator meet deadlines and provide useful, accurate information?</p>
	<p><b>U6—FOLLOW-UP AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT</b> Personnel evaluations should be followed up with appropriate professional development to strengthen identified areas in need of improvement.</p>	<p>Is there a structure in place to allow the use of data generated by teacher evaluation in developing professional development plans? Are there procedures in place that allow oversight to ensure appropriate follow-up of evaluation results?</p>

<b>FEASIBILITY</b>	<p><b>F1—PRACTICAL PROCEDURES</b> Personnel evaluation procedures should be practical to produce necessary information efficiently.</p>	<p>Are procedures for collecting data as simple and job-embedded as possible to prevent undue overburdening of either the teacher or the evaluator?</p>
	<p><b>F2—POLITICAL VIABILITY</b> Personnel evaluations should be planned and conducted with the anticipation of questions and concerns from all stakeholders to ensure their necessary cooperation.</p>	<p>What is the process in place that allows all stakeholders the opportunity to question the procedures or results of an evaluation? Is there a process to determine the outcome of questions asked concerning an evaluation?</p>
	<p><b>F3—FISCAL VIABILITY</b> Adequate time and resources should be provided for personnel evaluation activities.</p>	<p>Can the district afford the resources to conduct the teacher evaluation in the way that will maximize its effect?</p>
<b>ACCURACY</b>	<p><b>A1—VALIDITY ORIENTATION</b> The selection, development, and implementation of personnel evaluations should ensure that the interpretations made about the performance of the evaluatee are valid and not open to misinterpretation.</p>	<p>Are safeguards in place that ensure that all comments about a teacher’s performance are clearly communicated and directly related only to the specified duties of the teacher?</p>
	<p><b>A2—DEFINED EXPECTATIONS</b> The qualifications, role, and responsibilities of the evaluatee should be clearly defined.</p>	<p>Are the expectations and scope of work for the teacher clearly defined and understood not only by the evaluator, but also by the teacher as well?</p>
	<p><b>A3— ANALYSIS OF CONTEXT</b> Contextual variables that influence performance should be identified, described, and recorded.</p>	<p>Whenever data are collected, is there a structure or expectation in place that the details regarding the circumstances also be recorded (i.e., notation on observation forms)?</p>
	<p><b>A4—DOCUMENTED PURPOSES AND PROCEDURES</b> The evaluation purposes and procedures, both planned and actual, should be documented.</p>	<p>Is there a structure in place for ensuring that all evaluators and teachers clearly understand the purposes and procedures to be followed?</p>
	<p><b>A5—DEFENSIBLE INFORMATION</b> The information collected for personnel evaluations should be defensible.</p>	<p>Is there oversight in place to ensure that the results of any given evaluation would be the same regardless of evaluator?</p>
	<p><b>A6—RELIABLE INFORMATION</b> Personnel evaluation procedures should be chosen or developed and implemented to assure reliability.</p>	<p>Is there oversight to ensure that the procedures of evaluation are the same for all teachers regardless of the evaluator?</p>
	<p><b>A7—SYSTEMATIC DATA CONTROL</b> The information collected, processed, and reported about evaluatees should be systematically reviewed, corrected as appropriate, and kept in a secure location.</p>	<p>Is there a structure in place that ensures that all evaluation information is held in a secure location (e.g., locked file cabinets, secure server, etc.)? Is there a system in place to record person, time, date and purpose of access to records?</p>
	<p><b>A8—BIAS IDENTIFICATION AND MANAGEMENT</b> Personnel evaluations should be free of bias to ensure valid interpretations of data.</p>	<p>Is there oversight to ensure that the results of any evaluation are not influenced by preconceived ideas of the evaluator that may be unrelated to the actual job performance of the teacher?</p>



		Does evaluator training include bias control?
A9—ANALYSIS OF INFORMATION The information collected for personnel evaluations should be systematic and accurate to effectively achieve the purposes of the evaluation.		Is there oversight of the evaluator’s final reports and disposition to ensure continued accuracy and use of data? Do the personnel evaluations of the evaluators include their performance in evaluation?
A10—JUSTIFIED CONCLUSIONS The evaluative conclusions about evaluatee performance should be explicitly justified to ensure that evaluatees and others with a legitimate right to know can have confidence in them.		Is there a structure in place that requires the evaluator to justify the disposition of an evaluation based on documentation of performance?
A11—META-EVALUATION Personnel evaluation systems should be examined periodically using these and other appropriate standards to make necessary revisions.		Is there a system in place to allow the periodic review of the teacher evaluation system to ensure its continued usefulness?

Table 5 (Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 2007).

*Summary*

When theatre arts teachers are not evaluated in ways that are of value to them, both the theatre arts teachers and their students may suffer. Administrators may use evaluation to determine how building space, budget and even school class schedules are handled (Maranzano, 2000). Theatre arts teachers may be edged out of needed programming space, the loss of classes through scheduling, or they may lose materials through budget. All of these concerns are handled through administrative decisions.

Additionally, teachers cannot grow professionally if they do not have proper evaluation (Peterson, 2000). The most prevalent reason for this problem is that evaluation in the form of administrator observation is limited (Danielson & McGreal, 2000; Peterson, 2000). Without comprehensive and thorough evaluation for theatre arts educators, the field will most likely suffer as a result.

These major concerns cited throughout the research are indicative of the complexity of the nature of evaluation for theatre arts teachers. The opinions and perceptions of theatre arts teachers should be addressed when the impact of evaluation practices are reviewed. Current attention to this critical area of teacher evaluation may provide some insight into the necessary changes that need to be made in theatre arts evaluation practices in Virginia.

### Chapter Three: Methodology

#### *Purpose*

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the perceptions and opinions of theatre arts educators in Virginia. Current methods for the evaluation of teachers appear to have limited applicability for the majority of performing arts teachers due to the specialized nature of what it is they teach (Maranzano, 2000; Peterson, 2000; Rush, 1997; Stronge, 2006; Taebel, 1990a, 1990b; Wolf, 1973). Instructional leaders whose responsibilities include observation and evaluation may find additional challenges when charged with evaluating performing arts teachers using general educational models. In order for educational leaders to make informed evaluation decisions, it is important for them to consider the contributions of performing arts teachers. The branch of the performing arts that was the focus of this study was theatre arts. It generally is held that administrators do not have the expertise that theatre arts teachers have in the area of best practices in theatre education and, consequently, expertise in evaluation methods applicable for theatre arts teachers (Henniger, 2002; Landon, 1965). It is the knowledge of both theatre arts teachers and administrators that needs to be extrapolated in order to understand what is happening currently in teacher performance evaluation and what needs to be changed in order to make evaluation for theatre arts teachers an experience from which they can learn and grow and as a result be better prepared to teach their students. Thus, the problem investigated by this study was to understand the issues

surrounding evaluation in regards to performing arts (i.e., theatre/drama) teachers. Specifically, the following issues were investigated:

Research Questions:

6. How do theatre teachers and administrators perceive performance evaluation practices?

(The Joint Committee of Standards Evaluation informs the following four research questions)

7. How do theatre teachers and administrators perceive the quality of evaluation in terms of propriety standards?
8. How do theatre teachers and administrators perceive the quality of evaluation in terms of utility standards?
9. How do theatre teachers and administrators perceive the quality of evaluation in terms of feasibility standards?
10. How do theatre teachers and administrators perceive the quality of evaluation in terms of accuracy standards?

#### *Sample Selection*

This study utilized a type of purposeful sampling called critical case sampling. Critical cases are those that “make a point quite dramatically or are, for some reason, particularly important in the scheme of things” (Patton, 2002, p. 236). Patton stated that “another clue to the existence of a critical case is a key informant observation to the effect that if it happens there, it will happen anywhere” (Patton, 2002, p. 236). The researcher interviewed eight pairs of two: theatre arts teachers and the administrator

responsible for evaluating them. This yielded a total of sixteen participants. Criterion for this study included theatre arts teachers who met the following:

1. teach theatre as their primary subject focus at the high school level in Virginia;
2. maintain a theatre program during after school hours that include one act play festival competition responsibilities (VHSL participants), full theatre productions, or a combination of these;
3. have experienced being evaluated by an administrator in their current teaching position.

The most important criteria for this study was to ensure that each theatre arts teacher have experience with administrative evaluation (i.e., each had to have been evaluated several times during their careers in their current teacher position), so that the nuances of these experiences can be explored. A table and a key of the demographics of the participants are listed below.

Table 6: Study Demographic Information—Characteristics of Participants

PARTICIPANTS	DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION (See Key)					
	A through H	F/M	C/A	T/A	MA	>10
Participant A1	F	C	T	MA		<10
Participant A2	F	C	A	MA		<10
Participant B1	M	C	T	MA	>10	
Participant B2	M	C	A	MA	>10	
Participant C1	M	C	T		>10	
Participant C2	F	C	A	MA		<10
Participant D1	M	C	T		>10	
Participant D2	F	A	A	MA		<10
Participant E1	F	C	T	MA	>10	
Participant E2	F	A	A	MA	>10	
Participant F1	F	C	T	MA	>10	
Participant F2	M	A	A	MA		<10
Participant G1	F	C	T			<10
Participant G2	F	C	A	MA		<10
Participant H1	F	C	T	MA	>10	
Participant H2	F	A	A	MA		<10

Table 7: Key to Study Demographic Information—Characteristics of Participants

F/M	Female or Male
C/A	Caucasian or African-American
T/A	Teacher or Administrator
MA	Does the participant have a master's degree?
>10	Over ten years experience
<10	Less than ten years experience (no participant had less than five years experience)

### *Background for Selected Methodology*

It was appropriate to use a qualitative design for this study for several reasons.

The first of which is the nature of theatre itself. Theatre, as described by Taylor (1996) in *Researching Drama and Arts Education*, should be studied in ways that makes sense to study theatre: the few existing studies regarding professional theatre or the merits of

theatre in America are designed based on an anthropological premise—the study of culture. Qualitative research is the study of learning (in culture) through art and science (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). What better way to study theatre education than to use an approach that somewhat mirrors this approach (Carroll, 1996)? In addition, the one appropriate methodology for research in drama is grounded in the natural setting of theatre activity (Carroll 1996). The reason behind this is that theatre, by its very nature, is a non-reproducible experience. Without the ‘voice’ (i.e., qualitative methods of collecting data) of the participant, it is possible to lose a unique set of social relationships that become a single unit of experience capable of analysis and study (Carroll, 1996). The researcher for this study has had a long career in educational theatre (see *Researcher as Instrument*) which leads to understanding of the participants and an understanding of the nature of those participants to want express themselves as most theatre practitioners would: verbally to an audience (Neelands, 1996). This can also be described by Neelands as “the professional is personal” (p. 157). The issue surrounding the blurring of professional and personal identities was central to Fullan’s analysis of professional change (Fullan, 1982).

### *Using a Critical Paradigm*

Patton (2002) described a paradigm as “a worldview—a way of thinking about and making sense of the complexities of the real world” (p. 69). He went on to state that paradigms are deeply embedded in the socialization of adherents and practitioners. The critical realist paradigm most closely aligns with the objectives as a researcher in recording responses from teachers and administrators when asked about their perceptions and experiences with evaluation. According to Dobson (2002):

The critical realist agrees that our knowledge of reality is a result of social conditioning and, thus, cannot be understood independently of the social actors involved in the knowledge derivation process. However, it takes issue with the belief that the reality itself is a product of this knowledge derivation process. The critical realist asserts that “real objects are subject to value laden observation”; the reality and the value-laden observation of reality operating in two different dimensions, one intransitive and relatively enduring; the other transitive and changing. (p. 17)

This statement reflects the experiences and decision processes that led the researcher to the selection of the research paradigm. The researcher believes that knowledge of reality is a result of social conditioning, but, as discussed by Dobson, reality itself is also a product of this derivation process. Therefore, though the statements that the participants make will be subject to the researcher’s value-laden observations, the researcher rejects the notion that reality itself (according to the participants, i.e., ‘their’ realities) is exclusively a product of this knowledge derivation process. What the researcher held to be reality regarding the focus of this study was a power imbalance in the nature of the relationships between administrators and those who teach theatre arts classes: it is the perspectives of the teachers that are overlooked. It is crucial to use the voices of those who are in the position of teaching theatre arts and even more so, evaluated on their teaching performance. Taylor (1996) noted that there is an underlying attitude and stereotype that theatre teachers are not theorists and therefore their opinions do not matter when nothing could be further from the truth. He noted that theatre



practitioners were the one group that was under-represented in the process of writing the *Nation Standards for Arts Education* (Taylor, 1996). Taylor stated:

Why is it that the thirty-two names listed as committee members of the *Standards* only three, two high-school teachers and one principal of an elementary school, could be considered direct representatives of the predominant sites where these standards will be achieved? (p.5)

Rossmann and Rallis (2003) relate this power imbalance to the paradigm in which this study was situated, saying: “The critical realist paradigm analyzes the power relations embedded in political and economic structures. Radical social change is viewed as arising from crises in these basic social systems, leading to more equitable distributions of power and wealth” (p. 47). The researcher holds acknowledged assumptions about the nature and power of the political structure in schools which by extension, affects the participants. In social and political strata, administrators hold power over teachers, including fine arts teachers, by the nature of their jobs (Larsen & Malen, 1997). Administrators are responsible for hiring many of their staff as well as evaluating them. Administrators can terminate a teacher’s job if the teacher doesn’t meet his/her contract requirements. There are many angles in which this can be observed, though the researcher will follow Eisner in determining what is most effective in revealing the problems that theatre arts teachers face.

*Perspective: Eisner’s Art Education Critique*

Eisner (1998) described perspective as a way of examining situations from various angles (p. 49). In creating a perspective for this work, it was important to honor those who have a recognized history in education and art and are champions for the

cause. The researcher shares the perspectives of those who have had such an influence in the field. Eisner's works speak to the survival of the arts in education, and in many ways his collected works communicate his perception that school leaders have derailed the process of providing arts curricula for all students. It is Eisner's perspective that served as the critical lens for this study. Although it is not readily definable, it is clearly critical, asserting that though the arts are not treated fairly in K-12 education, they have a rightful place in terms of policies, planning and administrative sheltering.

In his book, *Reimagining Schools*, Eisner (2005) wrote:

...insofar as we in schools, colleges, and universities are interested in providing the conditions that enable students to secure deep and diverse forms of meaning in their lives—we cannot in good conscience omit the fine arts. Insofar as we seek to develop the skills for securing such meanings, we must develop multiple forms of literacy. Such meanings do not accrue to the unprepared mind. The task of the schools is to provide the conditions that foster the development of such literacy.

At present, for the vast majority of students, the schools fail in this task. (p. 83)

The words of Eisner, quoted above, reflect a common theme that is communicated in most of his work. His words and descriptions of the arts in education will echo through this study. This perspective, deemed Eisner's "arts education critique" for the purposes of this study, is one that intertwines a critical perspective with an understanding of the importance of arts education as well as the challenges that theatre arts teachers face. Eisner is well-known for his lifetime of work in both education and the arts; his long list of publications encompasses both arts and education topics. In addition to being both an artist and an educator, Eisner's work includes an interest in how to create better

educational settings and situations for arts educators in the name of understanding and community. This study sought understanding a la Eisner's visions.

Eisner is interested in how schools decide what to teach, how to evaluate teachers, and how to reform schools so that they can educate genuinely. He stated: "My background in the arts has taught me to try to pay attention to configurations, to the ways in which components relate to each other and how it is that they influence each other" (Eisner, 2005, p. 3). This notion of configuration includes how all arts (and in this study specifically, the theatre arts) should be framed and taught having a rightful place within the walls of every school for every student and how the administrators and teachers fit as components. It is this notion of paying attention to the components that relate to and influence each other that was of concern in this study. In this study, the perspectives of theatre arts teachers and administrators were explored to understand what practices might better suit evaluation methods for theatre arts teachers, thus opening avenues for future resolution.

#### *Method for the Study*

Collective case study, a term coined by Robert Yin (1984), is a strategy that is used to describe the collection of several cases within a single study to achieve the aim of shedding light on a particular pre-given issue, concept, or problem. Each team (teacher and administrator) represented one case.

In case studies, the researcher seeks to understand a larger phenomenon through intensive study of one (or several) specific instance/s (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). A case study is a holistic inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its natural setting: the evaluation of teachers in their workplace is the basis for this method.

It was crucial to use the voices of those who are in the position of teaching theatre arts and even more so, evaluated on their teaching performance. To reiterate the words of Taylor (1996) who noted that there is an underlying attitude and stereotype that theatre teachers are not theorists and therefore their opinions do not matter. Taylor (1996) said that nothing could be further from the truth. It is for this reason that theatre arts teachers were the primary focus of this study. It is their expertise that is overlooked. It is their understanding of the issues of evaluation that the researcher seeks to define and illustrate.

### *Instrumentation*

In order to align the research questions with the interview questions and the Joint Committee Standards, a two-step process was implemented to strengthen the validity of the instrument to be used in the study. Part I of the process consisted of a panel of three experts to review the Personnel Evaluation Standards set forth by the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (2007) and compare the standards to the interview and follow-up questions set forth by the researcher. The panel made suggestions, additions, and changes to the questions as well as tables in which to present their findings. To confirm the congruence of the interview questions with the Personnel Evaluation Standards, the same panel of three experts in educational leadership and performance standards reviewed a Table of Specifications with all experts confirming the alignment of the research questions with the standards and functions (see Tables 6, 7, 8, and 9 below).

In part II of the process, the researcher asked both theatre arts teachers and administrators to review the questions to determine if the questions use terminology familiar to them. The researcher also asked them if the interview questions and follow-

up questions are familiar enough to be answered in the course of an interview. The questions were then reworded to reflect the suggestions and revisions as necessary before the study began.

### *Data Generation*

This research study focused on evaluation of theatre arts teachers and used the perceptions of select Virginia theatre arts teachers and administrators who evaluate them for their expertise on the subject (see Sample). A cross-case analysis was used to gain a better understanding of the participants' perspectives. The critical realist paradigm used in this study informed the creation of the interview questions (see Chapter 1); these questions were concentrated on professional experiences that have shaped beliefs, issues of power, and equality.

### *Interviews*

This study used a semi-structured interview format. The following interview guide was created based on the research questions (Tables 8 through 11):

Table 8: Definition of Terms Aligned with Research Questions

<b>Research Category</b>	<b>Definition of Terms</b>	<b>Research Question</b>
Process of Evaluation	The evaluation process as determined and utilized by the participants.	How do theatre teachers and school administrators perceive teacher performance evaluation practices?
Propriety Standards	Intended to ensure that a personnel evaluation will be conducted legally, ethically, and with due regard for the welfare of the evaluatee and those involved in the evaluation.	How do theatre teachers and administrators perceive the quality of evaluation in terms of propriety standards?
Utility Standards	Intended to guide evaluations so that they will be informative, timely, and influential.	How do theatre teachers and administrators perceive the quality of evaluation in terms of utility standards?
Feasibility Standards	Intended to guide personnel systems so that they are as easy to implement as possible, efficient in their use of time and resources, adequately funded, and viable from a political standpoint.	How do theatre teachers and administrators perceive evaluation in terms of feasibility standards?
Accuracy Standards	Determine whether an evaluation has produced sound information. Personnel evaluations should be appropriate for the purpose of the evaluation and the evaluatees being evaluated and the context in which they work.	How do theatre teachers and administrators perceive the quality of evaluation in terms of accuracy standards?

Table 8 (Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 2007).

Table 9: Research Questions Aligned with Interview Questions and Follow-up Interview Questions

Research Question	Interview Question	Follow-up Interview Question
How do theatre teachers and school administrators perceive teacher performance evaluation practices?	1. Describe the evaluation process from the beginning of the year until the end of the year.	1a. Describe the tools or instruments included in the procedures. 1b. How are you informed of these procedures? U2
How do theatre teachers and administrators perceive the quality of evaluation in terms of propriety standards?	<p>2. What are the required duties and expectations of your job as defined by your job description? (t) P2/A2</p> <p>3. Describe how your evaluation process addresses strengths and recommended areas of growth for those being evaluated. A9/P5</p> <p>4. How do you ensure that evaluation data of theater arts teachers follows legal guidelines and is conducted in a confidential manner? (a) P3</p> <p>5. Describe the manner in which the results of employee appraisal are communicated. (formal conference, report in your mailbox, etc.) P4/A3</p> <p>6. How does your evaluation process differentiate among teacher levels of performance and experiences? (a) P5/P7</p>	<p>4a. What processes are in place to ensure that performance reviews are conducted in a professional and constructive manner? (a) P3</p> <p>6a. Describe your “look-fors” and “red flags” in the teacher evaluation process. (a)</p>
How do theatre teachers and administrators perceive the quality of evaluation in terms of utility standards?	<p>7. What impact does the evaluation have on your teaching? (t) U1</p> <p>8. What training did you</p>	8a. Describe that training.

	<p>receive to implement the evaluation system? (a) U3/U5</p> <p>9. What training did you receive in order to understand the evaluation system? (t) U3/U5</p> <p>10. How does your evaluation process differentiate between the job performance of teachers with unrelated job descriptions, such as classroom teachers and theatre teachers? U4</p> <p>11. What links exist between evaluation data and planned staff development? U6</p>	<p>U3/U5</p> <p>9a. Describe that training. U3/U5</p>
<p>How do theatre teachers and administrators perceive evaluation in terms of feasibility standards?</p>	<p>12. How does the evaluation process promote the professional growth of teachers with varying skill and experience levels? (a) F1/F2</p>	
<p>How do theatre teachers and administrators perceive the quality of evaluation in terms of accuracy standards?</p>	<p>13. To what degree does your current evaluation process accurately assess the job performance of theatre arts teachers/ you? A1/P5</p> <p>14. How is information generated from teacher observations and job performance documented and shared with teachers? (a) A4</p> <p>15. What procedures are in place to ensure the confidentiality of teacher performance reviews? A7</p>	



	16. How does the performance evaluation protocol ensure objectivity in the evaluation process? A8	
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(t)=teachers

(a)=administrators

Interview questions that are not demarcated are to be asked of both teachers and administrators

Table 10: Alignment of Interview Questions to Joint Committee Standards

Standard		Strand Definition	Question
Propriety	P1	Service Orientation	
	P2	Appropriate Policies and Procedures	2
	P3	Access to Evaluation Information	4; 4a
	P4	Interaction with Evaluatees	5
	P5	Balanced Evaluation	3, 6; 6a
	P6	Conflict of Interest	6
	P7	Legal Viability	
Utility	U1	Constructive Orientation	7
	U2	Defined Uses	1b
	U3	Evaluator Qualifications	8; 8a; 9; 9a
	U4	Explicit Criteria	10
	U5	Functional Reporting	8; 8a; 9; 9a
	U6	Professional Development	11
Feasibility	F1	Practical Procedures	12
	F2	Political Viability	12
	F3	Fiscal Viability	
Accuracy	A1	Validity Orientation	13
	A2	Defined Expectations	2
	A3	Analysis of Context	5
	A4	Documented Purposes and Procedures	14, 1a
	A5	Defensible Information	
	A6	Reliable Information	
	A7	Systematic Data Control	15
	A8	Bias	16
	A9	Analysis of Information	3
	A10	Justified Conclusions	
	A11	Metaevaluation	

NOTE: Standards in which the cell block is gray are not within the expected realm for administrators or teachers to know (see: Panel of Experts)

Table 11: Joint Committee Standards Definitions

<p><b>Propriety Standards</b></p> <p>The Propriety Standards are intended to ensure that a personnel evaluation will be conducted legally, ethically, and with due regard for the welfare of the evaluatee and those involved in the evaluation.</p>
<p>P1 Service Orientation. Personnel evaluations should promote sound education, fulfillment of institutional missions, and effective performance of job responsibilities, so that the educational needs of students, community, and society are met.</p>
<p>P2 Appropriate Policies and Procedures. Guidelines for personnel evaluations should be recorded and provided to the evaluatee in policy statements, negotiated agreements, and/or personnel evaluation manuals, so that evaluations are consistent, equitable, and fair.</p>
<p>P3 Access to Evaluation Information. Access to evaluation information should be limited to the persons with established legitimate permission to review and use the information, so that confidentiality is maintained and privacy protected.</p>
<p>P4 Interactions with Evaluatees. The evaluator should respect human dignity and act in a professional, considerate, and courteous manner, so that the evaluatee's self-esteem, motivation, professional reputations, performance, and attitude toward personnel evaluation are enhanced or, at least, not needlessly damaged.</p>
<p>P5 Balanced Evaluation. Personnel evaluations should provide information that identifies both strengths and weaknesses, so that strengths can be built upon and weaknesses addressed.</p>
<p>P6 Conflict of Interest. Existing and potential conflicts of interest should be identified and dealt with openly and honestly, so that they do not compromise the evaluation process and results.</p>
<p>P7 Legal Viability. Personnel evaluations should meet the requirements of all federal, state, and local laws, as well as case law, contracts, collective bargaining agreements, affirmative action policies, and local board policies and regulations or institutional statutes or bylaws, so that evaluators can successfully conduct fair, efficient, and responsible personnel evaluations.</p>
<p><b>Utility Standards</b></p> <p>The Utility Standards are intended to guide evaluations so that they will be informative, timely, and influential.</p>
<p>U1 Constructive Orientation. Personnel evaluations should be constructive, so that they not only help institutions develop human resources but encourage and assist those evaluated to provide excellent services in accordance with the institution's mission statements and goals.</p>
<p>U2 Defined Uses. Both the users and intended uses of a personnel evaluation should be identified at the beginning of the evaluation so that the evaluation can address appropriate questions and issues.</p>
<p>U3 Evaluator Qualifications. The evaluation system should be developed, implemented, and managed by persons with the necessary qualifications, skills, training, and authority, so that evaluation reports are properly conducted, respected and used.</p>

U4 Explicit Criteria. Evaluators should identify and justify the criteria used to interpret and judge evaluatee performance, so that the basis for interpretation and judgment provide a clear and defensible rationale for results.
U5 Functional Reporting. Reports should be clear, timely, accurate, and germane, so that they are of practical value to the evaluatee and other appropriate audiences.
U6 Professional Development. Personnel evaluations should inform users and evaluatees of areas in need of professional development, so that all educational personnel can better address the institution's missions and goals, fulfill their roles and responsibilities, and meet the needs of students.
<b>Feasibility Standards</b> The Feasibility Standards are intended to guide personnel evaluation systems so that they are as easy to implement as possible, efficient in their use of time and resources, adequately funded, and viable from a political standpoint.
F1 Practical Procedures. Personnel evaluation procedures should be practical, so that they produce the needed information in efficient, non-disruptive ways.
F2 Political Viability. Personnel evaluations should be planned and conducted with the anticipation of questions from evaluatees and others with a legitimate right to know, so that their questions can be addressed and their cooperation obtained.
F3 Fiscal Viability. Adequate time and resources should be provided for personnel evaluation activities, so that evaluation can be effectively implemented, the results fully communicated, and appropriate follow-up activities identified.
<b>Accuracy Standards</b> The accuracy standards determine whether an evaluation has produced sound information. Personnel evaluations must be technically adequate and as complete as possible to allow sound judgments and decisions to be made. The evaluation methodology should be appropriate for the purpose of the evaluation and the evaluatees being evaluated and the context in which they work.
A1 Validity Orientation. The selection, development, and implementation of personnel evaluations should ensure that the interpretations made about the performance of the evaluatee are valid and not open to misinterpretation.
A2 Defined Expectations. The qualifications, role, and performance expectations of the evaluatee should be clearly defined, so that the evaluator can determine the evaluation data and information needed to ensure validity.
A3 Analysis of Context. Contextual variables that influence performance should be identified, described, and recorded, so that they can be considered when interpreting an evaluatee's performance.
A4 Documented Purposes and Procedures. The evaluation purposes and procedures, both planned and actual, should be documented, so that they can be clearly explained and justified.
A5 Defensible Information. The information collected for personnel evaluations should be defensible, so that the information can be reliably and validly interpreted.

A6 Reliable Information. Personnel evaluation procedures should be chosen or developed and implemented to assure reliability, so that the information obtained will provide consistent indications of the evaluatee's performance.
A7 Systematic Data Control . The information collected, processed, and reported about evaluatees should be systematically reviewed, corrected as appropriate, and kept secure, so that accurate judgments about the evaluatee's performance can be made and appropriate levels of confidentiality maintained.
A8 Bias Identification and Management. Personnel evaluations should be free of bias, so that interpretations of the evaluatee's qualifications or performance are valid.
A9 Analysis of Information. The information collected for personnel evaluations should be systematically and accurately analyzed, so that the purposes of the evaluation are effectively achieved.
A10 Justified Conclusions. The evaluative conclusions about the evaluatee's performance should be explicitly justified, so that evaluatees and others with a legitimate right to know can have confidence in them.
A11 Metaevaluation. Personnel evaluation systems should be examined periodically using these and other appropriate standards, so that mistakes are prevented or detected and promptly corrected, and sound personnel evaluation practices are developed and maintained over time.

Table 11 (Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 2007).

### *Data Collection and Analysis*

Interview tapes were transcribed verbatim. The emerging patterns in the interviews were identified, coded, categorized, classified, and labeled (Patton, 2002). Coding is the process of unitizing, categorizing, and then labeling the data (Patton, 2000). Coding linked data to conceptual issues (Rossman & Rallis, 2003, p. 286). The researcher used both inductive analysis and analyst-constructed categories. Inductive analysis allowed the researcher to identify indigenous categories. The categories developed from the patterns that appeared (Patton, 2002). The researcher paid special attention to the patterns and analyzed data. The memos addressed analytic questions that emerged.

Data was coded more than once in order to expand or collapse existing categories. The categorical approach was used to analyze the interviews. Based in grounded theory, this method consisted of closely examining the similarities and differences that were

presented in the data. In order to deeply explore these inner perceptions, the “unit of analysis” was *phrases*. The researcher used both inductive analysis and analyst-constructed categories. Inductive analysis allowed the researcher to identify indigenous categories. These are the categories that are expressed through the emic view. Therefore, the categories are reflected in the words of the participants (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). However, the critical realist view is informing the research study. Therefore, the researcher imposed the etic view. As a result, categories emerged through the literature.

One drawback of using analyst-constructed categories is that “it imposes a world of meaning on the participants that better reflects the observer’s world than the world under study” (Patton, 2002, p. 460). The researcher was cognizant of this weakness and ensured that both the indigenous categories and analyst-constructed categories informed data analysis; additionally, the researcher shared a professional history having taught the same subject matter as the participants which ensured that phrases and terminology used by the participants in describing their work was not be lost during the interview transcriptions or in coding.

The researcher looked for categories that arise from the interviews and compare those categories for similarities and differences. The researcher compared the teacher and administrator responses as a pair (per team/school) for differences in perspectives guided by the interview questions; in addition, the researcher compared patterns across all of the interviews for teachers and for all administrators for common patterns. The researcher also compared the interview responses to the Joint Committee Standards (see Tables 6-9) for common patterns across all of the interviews.

Analysis changes generated and collected data into research findings (Patton, 2002). Rossman and Rallis (2003) stated that analysis is composed of three parts. It involves organizing data into meaningful themes, interpreting meaning, and writing the results of the analysis coherently so that they bring understanding to others. Data analysis in this study will be ongoing and will consist of “recording and tracking analytical insights that occur during data collection” (Patton, 2002, p. 436).

#### *Trustworthiness and Authenticity*

The quality of this study depended, to a large extent, on the degree of attention that was devoted to trustworthiness and authenticity. There are many elements to consider when creating a study that is trustworthy. According to Rossman and Rallis (2003), for a study to be trustworthy, “it must be more than reliable and valid; it must be ethical” (p. 63). In addition, they suggest that: “competent practice, ethics and political sensitivity all contribute to a study’s trustworthiness. All research aims to produce a trustworthy study, that is one whose findings are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of” (p. 63). The researcher was aware of some of the possible pitfalls that may be encountered as a result of this. Trustworthiness in nonpositivistic research describes the rigor of the methods used and has been defined as a combination of four elements: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). These four elements, described at length in the following sections, was applied to this study to ensure that the results of the study were trustworthy.

*Credibility.* Credibility is used to determine how closely the findings match the perceptions of the subjects interviewed. Potential threats to credibility include (but are not limited to): perceptions/gender of interpretations of participants perceptions; comfort

level of the participant; biases of interviewer that may impact the data collection process; discussing topics/theories, etc., or what the subjects think that they should say rather than to share their actual perceptions; and the setting. Many or all of these can threaten the trustworthiness of a study.

In order to ensure credibility, the researcher utilized the following techniques: member checks, reflexive journaling, peer debriefing, and triangulation. According to Gall, Gall and Borg (2007), member checking involves “having research participants review statements in the report for accuracy and completeness. Correct factual errors, and if necessary, collect more data to reconcile discrepancies, rewrite the report, or include contrasting views” (p. 475). With member checking, the validity procedure shifts from the researchers to the participants in the study. Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe member checks as “the most crucial technique for establishing credibility” (p. 314) in a study. It consists of taking data and interpretations back to the participants in the study so that they can confirm the credibility of the information and narrative account. With the lens focused on participants, the researcher systematically checks the data and the narrative account (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

Reflexive journaling involves self-disclosing their assumptions, beliefs, and biases. This is the process whereby the researcher reports on personal beliefs, values, and biases that may shape their inquiry. It is important for the researcher to acknowledge and describe their entering beliefs and biases early in the research process to allow readers to understand their positions, and then to bracket or suspend those researcher biases as the study proceeds. This validity procedure uses the lens of the researcher but is clearly

positioned within the critical paradigm where individuals reflect on the social, cultural, and historical forces that shape their interpretations (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

A peer review or debriefing is the review of the data and research process by someone who is familiar with the research or the phenomenon being explored. A peer review provides support, plays devil's advocate, challenges the researchers' assumptions, pushes the researchers to the next step methodologically, and asks hard questions about methods and interpretations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Triangulation is a validity procedure where the researcher searches for convergence among multiple and different sources of information to form themes or categories in a study. Triangulation is a step taken by a researcher employing only the researcher's lens, and it is a systematic process of sorting through the data to find common themes or categories by eliminating overlapping areas (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

*Transferability.* Transferability takes place when the researcher applies her findings to other participants or contexts. Threats to transferability include: sample selection (location, experience, program qualities/components); setting; lack of description of participants/setting or situation.

To ensure transferability, the researcher utilized the following techniques: reflexive journaling and thick descriptions. According to Denzin (1989), "thick descriptions are deep, dense, detailed accounts...Thin descriptions, by contrast, lack detail, and simply report facts" (p. 83). The purpose of a thick description is that it creates verisimilitude, statements that produce for the readers the feelings that they have experienced, or could experience, the events being described in a study (Creswell &



Miller, 2000). The process of writing using thick description is to provide as much detail as possible. It may involve describing a small slice of interaction, experience, or action; locating individuals in specific situations; bringing a relationship or an interaction alive between two or more persons; or providing a detailed rendering of how people feel (Denzin, 1989). These information-rich cases provide useful information for a deep sense of inquiry as well as a variety of responses.

*Dependability.* Dependability requires that the study be consistent in its findings. In order to this, the methods must include reflexive journaling and multiple data collection methods. The researcher's multiple data collection methods were included critical case studies.

*Confirmability.* Confirmability seeks to establish whether the data and their interpretations can be traced primarily to the focus of the inquiry rather than to the researchers' beliefs and expectations. Confirmability can be established by reflexive journaling.

#### *Authenticity*

Authenticity, or the degree to which a study is useful and meaningful, is comprised of five criteria: fairness, ontological authenticity, educative authenticity, catalytic authenticity, and tactical authenticity (Dimock, 2001).

Several methods were used to demonstrate authenticity in the results of this study. There are five distinct dimensions of authenticity and they are as follows: fairness; ontological authenticity; educative authenticity; catalytic authenticity; and tactical authenticity. The idea of fairness refers to making sure that all of the participants' voices are "heard" in the results of the study. The inquirer seeks to give voice to the alternative

perspectives of the participants, and in so doing, contributes to the quality of the inquiry (Lincoln, 1997). The methods that were used to demonstrate fairness include member checking and peer debriefing.

*Ontological Authenticity.* Ontological authenticity is achieved when participants experience personal growth (Dimock, 2001). Creating a caring and trustful relationship between the inquirer and the respondents also contributes to ontological authenticity. The potential threats to ontological authenticity include: asking surface or narrow questions; and misinterpreting nonverbal or verbal cues from participants. The methods that were used to demonstrate ontological authenticity included follow-up questions during the interview to provide clarity and depth of understanding.

*Educative Authenticity.* Educative authenticity is achieved when participants expand their knowledge about the constructions and perspectives of other stakeholders in the same context. As the participants in the inquiry, respondents are asked to verify the understanding of the researcher during member-checks. The potential threats to educative authenticity include: not providing feedback or sharing results; not providing results that are user-friendly; and finally, misinterpreting nonverbal or verbal cues from participants. To demonstrate educative authenticity, the following methods were used: distributing copies of the research results to participants; and discussing the research results with the participants at the conclusion of the study.

*Catalytic Authenticity.* Catalytic authenticity depends upon the participants' decisions and actions as a result of the participation of the study. The methods that were used to demonstrate catalytic authenticity include: member checking; follow-up

questions during the interview; distribution of study results to participants; and finally, discussion of study results at the conclusion of the study.

*Tactical Authenticity.* The final unit of authenticity is tactical authenticity.

Tactical authenticity means that stakeholders may increase their personal knowledge during the inquiry or learn more about the meanings held by others, but the inquiry must also empower action of the part of the stakeholders (Dimock, 2001). As Lincoln (1997) noted:

Fairness could certainly apply to any and all forms of qualitative research and at any stage of the research. But one might be able to achieve catalytic or tactical authenticity only after ontological and educative authenticity have been reasonably fully achieved. (p. 41)

The methods that were used to demonstrate tactical authenticity in the results of the study include: member checking; follow-up questions during the interview; distribution of the study results to the participants at the conclusion of the study; and finally, discussion of study results with participants after the conclusion of the study.

#### *Ethical Safeguards*

All efforts were made by the researcher to ensure that the participants of this study were ethically safeguarded. Concerning the protecting of human subjects involved in research, the proposal was submitted to the School of Education Human Subjects Review Committee. Additionally, the participants were not interviewed and data was not collected until approval from the committee was given. Participants signed a consent form that detailed their rights and responsibilities involved in the study (see appendix).

Interviews were recorded using digital voice recording methods. Digitally recording the interview allowed the researcher to take strategic and focused field notes (Patton, 2002). Each participant was provided with a consent form detailing the process (see appendix). Participant responses were recorded using a pseudonym. This allowed the researcher to determine the participant's identity and ensure confidentiality of responses. The key linking the participant to their pseudonym was destroyed at the conclusion of the study. Each participant read and reviewed summaries of the information that was generated during the interview to check for accuracy. Each individual interview session was digitally voice recorded to ensure accurate data analysis. The tapes were deleted after transcription or coding and are no longer available for use. All effort was made to conceal the participant's identity in the study's report of results and to keep personal information confidential.

#### *Intended Audience*

The results are particularly salient to educators specializing in administration and performing arts. The primary audience for the study includes professors in academe, educational administrators, and teachers. Parents and community members may also find the outcomes interesting as they consider and evaluate educator concerns for teachers and by extension their students in the area of the performing arts. Secondary audience members include policy makers and other members in the field of education.

Through focused reflection the researcher endeavored to contribute to a greater awareness and understanding of how theatre arts teachers are evaluated and the impact these evaluation methods have on all aspects of performing arts education.

Results of the study may be presented at education conferences especially targeted at administration, performing arts education or general education conferences that would target bringing greater awareness to performing arts education. Furthermore, results may be published in educational periodicals or included within professional development content. By sharing the result findings with others, the researcher hoped to (1) contribute to an increase in self-reflection and awareness of evaluation practices among administrators and those who create and utilize current evaluation systems, (2) expand understanding of the impact of the evaluation systems affects performing arts teachers (particularly theatre arts teachers), and (3) create meaning and facilitate communication for recommendations regarding specific implications the study results may have upon educational practice.

In critical analysis of the findings from this study, the results will initiate a dialogue that will point to making specific recommendations for future research. While currently more research is needed to create greater understanding in this area, future research may build on this study's findings to specifically identify alternatives to appropriately respond to evaluating theatre arts teachers to create a better future for the students whom they serve.

## Chapter Four: Results

### *Introduction*

The purpose of this study was to investigate the issues surrounding evaluation in regards to theatre arts teachers and administrators in Virginia. This qualitative study specifically investigated the following issues: 1) how theatre teachers and administrators perceived performance evaluation practices; 2) how theatre teachers and administrators perceived the quality of evaluation in terms of propriety standards; 3) how theatre teachers and administrators perceived the quality of evaluation in terms of utility standards; 4) how theatre teachers and administrators perceived the quality of evaluation in terms of feasibility standards; and finally, 5) how theatre teachers and administrators perceived the quality of evaluation on terms of accuracy standards. Note: The Joint Committee of Standards Evaluation informed Questions 2-5.

### *Sample Selection*

Pairs of teachers and administrators were chosen based on voluntary participation. The sample was based on a small critical sample of selected administrators and high school theatre teachers. This study utilized a type of purposeful sampling called critical case sampling. Critical cases are those that “make a point quite dramatically or are, for some reason, particularly important in the scheme of things” (Patton, 2002, p. 236). Patton stated that “another clue to the existence of a critical case is a key informant observation to the effect that if it happens there, it will happen anywhere” (Patton, 2002, p. 236). The researcher interviewed eight pairs of two: theatre arts teachers and the

administrators responsible for evaluating them (for a total of 16 participants). Criterion for this study included theatre arts teachers who met the following:

4. taught theatre as their primary subject focus at the high school level in Virginia;
5. maintained a theatre program during after school hours that include one act play festival competition responsibilities (VHSL participants), full theatre productions, or a combination of these; and
6. have had experience being evaluated by an administrator in their current teaching position.

#### *Research Study Response Rate*

One of the most important criteria for this study was to ensure that each theatre arts teacher had experience with administrative evaluation, (i.e., each had to have been evaluated several times during their careers in their current teaching position) so that the nuances of these experiences could be adequately explored. Of the 16 participants or eight pairs interviewed, three pairs were from the same county; however, though the evaluation systems had similarities, they were overall different from school to school (see Results).

Finally, eight pairs of teacher/administrator ‘teams’ from Virginia ranging from magnet schools to general education high schools to Virginia public schools designed for the performing arts were included in the study representing five different school divisions

#### *Findings of the Study*

The interview questions were derived from the original research questions, reviewed by a panel of experts, and specifically varied for administrators and theatre arts

teachers based on their occupation. Each participant was asked to respond to a member check at the conclusion of the interview. Many participants furnished copies of their evaluation materials for the researcher to review though they were not required to provide this information. As described in Chapter Three, all participants, schools, districts and university are represented by pseudonyms. Each pseudonym is designed to correspond alphabetically by pair and in order of the case listing; for example, Alexa and Andrea are listed as case one, Bard and Brian, listed as case two and so forth.

### *Findings Guidelines*

The following tables represent condensed responses to the specific interview questions, listed by question order with the theatre arts teacher's responses listed on the left. The table provides an overview of in order of the interview questions to allow the reader a quick glance of pair regarding the overall findings. In some instances, particular questions were directed to either the theatre arts teacher or the administrator but not both. In such cases, a parenthetical note is used in the table.

Following the table is a discussion based on the findings. The discussion does not reveal the questions in order of the interview; instead, the discussion for Chapter Four follows the participants' focus on what they deemed important, and what issues they gave the most time and attention to during the interview process. Stake (1995) wrote, "The important thing (when writing the case study report) is to write for the understanding that ought to be, not write down so as to minimize misinterpretation, but to write up as to maximize reader encounter with the complexity of the case" (p. 126). In some instances, the theatre arts teacher or the administrator answered questions with a few short words or phrases. Member checking was used after almost every question, and a follow-up phone



interview was also implemented in every case, but some participants did not elaborate on particular issues in either member checks or subsequent interviews. Therefore, the researcher clustered the topics in the discussion in order of their importance according to what the participants felt was important or emphasized throughout the interviews. Stake (1995) described this as using “description one by one of several major components of the case” (p. 127). For the reader, this means that all information can be found in either the table in order of interview question or within the description that follows for more detail of the participants involved in each case. The case study following the table is organized for the reader conceptually, covering four areas:

1. the evaluation process used by the district;
2. policies and procedures;
3. training and staff development; and,
4. impact, professional growth and ensuring objectivity in the evaluation process.

These areas cover the following questions in clusters, as follows:

1. the evaluation process used by the school district (interview Questions 1, 1a, and 1b);
2. policies and procedures (interview Questions 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 14 and 15);
3. training and staff development (interview Questions 8, 8a, 9, 9a, and 11);
4. impact, professional growth and ensuring objectivity in the evaluation process (interview Questions 7, 10, 12, 13, and 16).

By organizing the responses conceptually, the reader can see how the evaluation process impacted both the theatre arts teaches and administrators as one single case.

Additionally, because several interview questions were asked of either the theatre arts

teacher or the administrator but not asked of both theatre arts teachers and administrators as a pair, a cross-case analysis was the most sufficient way to present findings for specific interview questions. Those findings are listed following the cases.

*Case One: Alexa and Andrea*

Alexa and Andrea had worked together for ten years in a large suburban school (one of four high schools within the district) with a mixed-race student population located near central Virginia. Alexa held a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Theatre Education and a Master of Arts degree in Television and Media Performance. Andrea held a Master’s in Education, and was completing her doctorate in educational policy, planning and leadership at a university located about an hour’s drive from her home. The following table represents condensed responses to the specific interview questions, listed by question order with the theatre arts teacher’s responses listed on the left as Alexa. The findings of the case itself follow the table.

Table 12: Case One—Alexa and Andrea  
 Overview of Theatre Teacher/Administrator Condensed Responses Arranged by Interview Question

<b>Evaluation Process</b>	
<b>Teacher: A1 Alexa</b> 1. Describe the evaluation process from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.	<b>Administrator: A2 Andrea</b> 1. Describe the evaluation process from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.
Observation by administrator three times a year for new teachers	Observation by administrator three times a year
<b>Evaluation Instruments/Tools</b>	
<b>Teacher: A1 Alexa</b> 1a. Describe the tools or instruments included in the procedures.	<b>Administrator: A2 Andrea</b> 1a. Describe the tools or instruments included in the procedures.
Teacher observation form	Teacher observation form/uses scripting to communicate observations not listed on form
<b>Informed of Evaluation Procedures</b>	

<b>Teacher: A1 Alexa</b> 1b. How are you informed of these procedures? U2	<b>Administrator: A2 Andrea</b> 1b. How were you informed of these procedures? U2
Department head or mentor teacher	Policy determined by principal
<b>Duties and Expectations/Job Description</b>	
<b>Teacher: A1 Alexa</b> 2. What are the required duties and expectations of your job defined by your job description? P2/A2	<b>Administrator: A2 Andrea</b>
No job description	(Question was asked of theatre teachers only)
<b>Evaluation Process Addresses Strengths and Weaknesses</b>	
<b>Teacher: A1 Alexa</b> 3. Describe how your evaluation process addresses strengths and weaknesses for those being evaluated. A9/P5	<b>Administrator: A2 Andrea</b> 3. Describe how your evaluation process addresses strengths and weaknesses for those being evaluated. A9/P5
Not addressed in the evaluation report	Addressed in the evaluator's comments
<b>Follows Legal Guidelines</b>	
<b>Teacher: A1 Alexa</b>	<b>Administrator: A2 Andrea</b> 4. How do you ensure that evaluation data of theatre arts teachers follows legal guidelines and is conducted in a confidential manner? P3
(Question was asked of administrators only)	Follows county policy
<b>Performance Reviews Conducted Professionally/Constructively</b>	
<b>Teacher: A1 Alexa</b>	<b>Administrator: A2 Andrea</b> 4a. What processes are in place to ensure that performance reviews are conducted in a professional and constructive manner? P3
(Question was asked of administrators only)	County policy; share with teachers in advance
<b>Results of Employee Appraisals are Communicated</b>	
<b>Teacher: A1 Alexa</b> 5. Describe the manner in which the results of employee appraisals are communicated. (formal conference, report in your mailbox, etc.) P4/A3	<b>Administrator: A2 Andrea</b> 5. Describe the manner in which the results of employee appraisals are communicated. (formal conference, report in your mailbox, etc.) P4/A3
Formal conference	Formal conference
<b>Evaluation Process Differentiates Teacher Levels</b>	
<b>Teacher: A1 Alexa</b>	<b>Administrator: A2 Andrea</b> 6. How does the evaluation process differentiate among teacher levels of performance and experiences? P5/P7

(Question was asked of administrators only)	Process does not differentiate/administrator's use of the tool is determining factor
<b>Look fors and Red Flags</b>	
<b>Teacher: A1 Alexa</b>	<b>Administrator: A2 Andrea</b>
	6a. Describe your "look-fors" and "red flags" in the teacher evaluation process.
(Question was asked of administrators only)	Look fors: students engaged; what questions are students asking; what learning is taking place  Red flags: chaos; poor classroom management.
<b>Impact of Evaluation</b>	
<b>Teacher: A1 Alexa</b>	<b>Administrator: A2 Andrea</b>
7. What impact does the evaluation have on your teaching? U1	
Self-esteem boost	(Question was asked of theatre arts teachers only)
<b>Training to Implement /Understand Evaluation System</b>	
<b>Teacher: A1 Alexa</b>	<b>Administrator: A2 Andrea</b>
9. What training did you receive in order to understand the evaluation system? U3/U5	8. What training did you receive to implement the evaluation system? U3/U5
9a. Describe that training. U3/U5	8a. Describe that training. U3/U5
No training	Day long training to learn scripting techniques
<b>Differentiation Unrelated Job Descriptions</b>	
<b>Teacher: A1 Alexa</b>	<b>Administrator: A2 Andrea</b>
10. How does your evaluation process differentiate between the job performance of teachers with unrelated job descriptions, such as classroom teachers and theatre teachers? U4	10. How does your evaluation process differentiate between the job performance of teachers with unrelated job descriptions, such as classroom teachers and theatre teachers? U4
No differentiation	No differentiation
<b>Links Between Evaluation Data and Staff Development</b>	
<b>Teacher: A1 Alexa</b>	<b>Administrator: A2 Andrea</b>
11. What links exist between evaluation data and planned staff development? U6	11. What links exist between evaluation data and planned staff development? U6
No links	No links
<b>Evaluation Process Promotes Professional Growth</b>	

<b>Teacher: A1 Alexa</b> 12. How does the evaluation process promote your professional growth? F1/F2	<b>Administrator: A2 Andrea</b> 12. How does the evaluation process promote the professional growth of teachers with varying skills and experience levels? F1/F2
Evaluation process does not promote professional growth	Attempts to promote growth by teacher creating one personal goal per year
<b>Evaluation Accurately Assesses Job Performance/Theatre</b>	
<b>Teacher: A1 Alexa</b> 13. To what degree does your current evaluation process accurately assess your job performance? A1/P5	<b>Administrator: A2 Andrea</b> 13. To what degree does your current evaluation process accurately assess the job performance of theatre arts teachers? A1/P5
Not accurate/determined by administrator/subjective	More accurate for classroom teachers than for theatre teachers
<b>Information Generated From Evaluations Shared with Teachers</b>	
<b>Teacher: A1 Alexa</b>	<b>Administrator: A2 Andrea</b> 14. How is information generated from teacher observations and job performance documented and shared with teachers? A4
(Question was asked of administrators only)	Summative evaluation report is shared with teachers in formal/informal conferences
<b>Confidentiality of Teacher Performance Reviews</b>	
<b>Teacher: A1 Alexa</b> 15. What procedures are in place to ensure the confidentiality of teacher performance reviews? A7	<b>Administrator: A2 Andrea</b> 15. What procedures are in place to ensure the confidentiality of teacher performance reviews? A7
Problems are discussed behind closed doors	Evaluations are discussed behind closed doors All files are handled by administrators and school personnel at the central office
<b>Ensuring Objectivity in the Evaluation Process</b>	
<b>Teacher: A1 Alexa</b> 16. How does the performance evaluation protocol ensure objectivity in the evaluation process? A8	<b>Administrator: A2 Andrea</b> 16. How does the performance evaluation protocol ensure objectivity in the evaluation process? A8
It does not/subjective	It does not/subjective

Table 12 represents condensed responses found in the case of Alexa and Andrea.

Alexa and Andrea worked well together and described a relationship of mutual respect.

This pattern regarding how interactions with evaluatees were handled was prevalent

throughout most of the participants interviewed. Andrea commented, “I also, when I first started doing (evaluation for the) fine arts, had some frank conversations with the folks there because I know that I was out of my element a little bit. I got put in charge of the fine arts because I had been in the band—so, O.K.” Being “out of her element” for Andrea meant asking teachers in the fine arts department for input regarding evaluation so that she could better serve their needs.

*The Evaluation Process used by the School District.* Stronge and Tucker (2003) described teacher observation and portfolio review as the most familiar and prevalent form of teacher performance evaluation. In the case of Alexa and Andrea, teacher observation was used as the primary tool for evaluation. Both Alexa and Andrea described the same evaluation process and evaluation tools and both commented upon the use of the tools with negativity. Andrea said, “...you are supposed to pull out three positives and one area of growth—I cannot bring myself to do it that way, so I don’t.” Alexa concurred, “The evaluation sheet for classroom observation is not bad for core subjects...but it tends to fall apart for the fine arts people.” Whether or not the evaluation process was balanced also became a pattern throughout the cases and in the cross-case analysis.

However, Alexa could not find a job description for her position. This was a concern for Alexa because she was uncertain as to how she would be evaluated on such information. In addition, her concern was that the strengths or weaknesses of her teaching could not be identified without an initial job description to serve as a template for the evaluation process.

Andrea described the evaluation process as addressing strengths and weaknesses for those being evaluated through the use of scripting and reflection. Alexa, however, found that the scripting was not helpful, and commented that administrators would not be able to effectively comment on what areas of her teaching could be improved, stating, “The assistant principal, the senior teacher and even your department head—none of them are theatre people. These are the people that know that they do not understand what we are teaching!”

*Policies and Procedures.* In terms of how policies and procedures were handled in Alexa and Andrea’s school, both described a school environment that did not affect the relationship or evaluation outcomes of Alexa by Andrea but served as insight as to how the daily working relationships operated in terms of evaluation. School policies were handled according to the county and both Alexa and Andrea were aware of these policies and procedures and followed them. Modifications were made as determined by Alexa in determining the best use of the evaluation procedures. When describing how the evaluation process addressed strengths and weaknesses, Alexa stated:

And it depends also on where the teacher is in terms of her professional career—you know, it’s not that expectations for the summative change but when I’m going into a classroom observation the degree of expertise of the teacher has to come into play in terms of what I’m pulling out for the teacher to work on. I’m not going to pull out something very subtle for a new teacher to work on and I’m not going to give a glow for a great job on your bulletin board for a 20 year veteran. There has to be, you know, some sort of flexibility with that.

Most of the policies in place were viewed the same way by both Alexa and Andrea; however, the confidentiality process was viewed differently. While the post-conference was held behind closed doors and the summative evaluation report was signed by both, Alexa described the nonchalant way the information was distributed. Alexa said, “They are very sensitive about confidentiality if it’s a bad thing. But I’ve had people all around me as I’ve been handed an evaluation.” Andrea, on the other hand, described the process as much more formal and behind closed doors but she also described the process as rushed:

We have conferences after each of the observations and then there’s a conference for the summative. Now I’m going to be completely honest with you, I don’t always get to the conference in the way that I would like...so while we’re supposed to have a conference sometimes it’s “here’s what I’ve done, if you have any questions or you want to talk about this, my door is always open”—which isn’t as proactive as it should be. I’m being honest.

*Training and Staff Development in Regards to the Evaluation Process.* Training and staff development did not impact Alexa or Andrea. Both reported that there was little to no training to understand the evaluation process. Andrea reported that there was minimal training to use the process:

I went through a peer professional teaching act course as a teacher which really did help but wasn’t specifically designed for that. And then when I became an administrator they gave us a day-long training on doing evaluations but the primary focus of that was scripting...but the primary focus of that was scripting and we’re supposed to take down everything word for word.



Both Andrea and Alexa reported that there were no links between planned staff development and evaluation. Instead, staff development was driven by student test scores.

*Impact, Professional Growth and Ensuring Objectivity in the Evaluation Process.*

Finally, regarding the impact of the evaluation process, professional growth as a result of an evaluation, and ensuring objectivity in the evaluation process, both Alexa and Andrea had concerns that these aspects of the evaluation process impacted the personal interactions of those involved in the process. Alexa commented, “It’s always nice to know that you are at least appreciated.” And while she felt appreciated in her position, she understood the consequences for not being valued by her administration:

Years ago, the band director and I had a slight run-in and we took it to our assistant principal. I was told in one of my evaluations, not the summative, but the observation, the prior form that I needed to work on my relationships with staff and faculty at the school. To which I took great offense because I was probably giving as good as I got; and tried to deal with things one on one...however, with the leaving of a couple of people, and not to blow my own horn—but then the incredibly smooth-running of the performing arts (department) and working with one another, the administration sat up and went, oh we see!

*Case Two: Bard and Brian*

Bard and Brian worked together in the only high school in its district. Bard holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Theatre and a Master’s in Education. Brian held a Master’s in Education and was currently pursuing a doctorate in education at a nearby university. Although each of them had been at the school in their respective positions for longer than

five years, Brian had only evaluated Bard for three years. Therefore, many of Bard's answers reflected his experiences with previous administrators in his current teaching position. The following table represents the condensed responses, listed by question order with the theatre arts teacher's responses listed on the left as Bard. Following the table is a discussion based on the findings.

Table 13: Case Two—Bard and Brian  
Overview of Theatre Teacher/Administrator Condensed Responses Arranged by Interview Question

<b>Evaluation Process</b>	
<b>Teacher: B1 Bard</b> 1. Describe the evaluation process from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.	<b>Administrator: B2 Brian</b> 1. Describe the evaluation process from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.
A or B project observation/portfolio	A cycle full observation with pre-post conference B cycle portfolio review/project
<b>Evaluation Instruments/Tools</b>	
<b>Teacher: B1 Bard</b> 1a. Describe the tools or instruments included in the procedures.	<b>Administrator: B2 Brian</b> 1a. Describe the tools or instruments included in the procedures.
Teacher observation form, "check list"	Teacher observation form for competencies Scripting
<b>Informed of Evaluation Procedures</b>	
<b>Teacher: B1 Bard</b> 1b. How are you informed of these procedures? U2	<b>Administrator: B2 Brian</b> 1b. How were you informed of these procedures? U2
Administration email	Policy determined in manual
<b>Duties and Expectations/Job Description</b>	
<b>Teacher: B1 Bard</b> 2. What are the required duties and expectations of your job defined by your job description? P2/A2	<b>Administrator: B2 Brian</b>
No job description	(Question was asked of theatre arts teachers only)
<b>Evaluation Process Addresses Strengths and Weaknesses</b>	
<b>Teacher: B1 Bard</b> 3. Describe how your evaluation process addresses strengths and weaknesses for those being evaluated. A9/P5	<b>Administrator: B2 Brian</b> 3. Describe how your evaluation process addresses strengths and weaknesses for those being evaluated. A9/P5

Addressed in evaluation form in terms of rating scale	Addressed in the evaluator's comments or Performance Improvement Plan
<b>Follows Legal Guidelines</b>	
<b>Teacher: B1 Bard</b>	<b>Administrator: B2 Brian</b> 4. How do you ensure that evaluation data of theatre arts teachers follows legal guidelines and is conducted in a confidential manner? P3
(Question was asked of administrators only)	All documents are copied and placed in files
<b>Performance Reviews Conducted Professionally/Constructively</b>	
<b>Teacher: B1 Bard</b>	<b>Administrator: B2 Brian</b> 4a. What processes are in place to ensure that performance reviews are conducted in a professional and constructive manner? P3
(Question was asked of administrators only)	Determined by administrator/shared with teachers up front
<b>Results of Employee Appraisals are Communicated</b>	
<b>Teacher: B1 Bard</b> 5. Describe the manner in which the results of employee appraisals are communicated. (formal conference, report in your mailbox, etc.) P4/A3	<b>Administrator: B2 Brian</b> 5. Describe the manner in which the results of employee appraisals are communicated. (formal conference, report in your mailbox, etc.) P4/A3
Formal conference if discrepancy otherwise signed/ placed in mailbox	Formal conference/signed letters/memos handed in person—not placed in mailbox
<b>Evaluation Process Differentiates Teacher Levels</b>	
<b>Teacher: B1 Bard</b>	<b>Administrator: B2 Brian</b> 6. How does the evaluation process differentiate among teacher levels of performance and experiences? P5/P7
(Question was asked of administrators only)	Process does not differentiate/discretion issued by administrator
<b>Look fors and Red Flags</b>	
<b>Teacher: B1 Bard</b>	<b>Administrator: B2 Brian</b> 6a. Describe your "look-fors" and "red flags" in the teacher evaluation process.
(Question was asked of administrators only)	Look fors: Instructional strategies  Red flags: poor classroom management
<b>Impact of Evaluation</b>	
<b>Teacher: B1 Bard</b> 7. What impact does the evaluation have on your teaching? U1	<b>Administrator: B2 Brian</b>

Can damage psyche	(Question was asked of theatre arts teachers only)
<b>Training to Implement /Understand Evaluation System</b>	
<p><b>Teacher: B1 Bard</b>                      9. What training did you receive in order to understand the evaluation system?                      U3/U5                      9a. Describe that training. U3/U5</p>	<p><b>Administrator: B2 Brian</b>                      8. What training did you receive to implement the evaluation system?                      U3/U5                      8a. Describe that training. U3/U5</p>
New teachers have a mentor	No training
<b>Differentiation Unrelated Job Descriptions</b>	
<p><b>Teacher: B1 Bard</b>                      10. How does your evaluation process differentiate between the job performance of teachers with unrelated job descriptions, such as classroom teachers and theatre teachers? U4</p>	<p><b>Administrator: B2 Brian</b>                      10. How does your evaluation process differentiate between the job performance of teachers with unrelated job descriptions, such as classroom teachers and theatre teachers? U4</p>
No differentiation	No differentiation/discretion of administrator in use of evaluation tools
<b>Links Between Evaluation Data and Staff Development</b>	
<p><b>Teacher: B1 Bard</b>                      11. What links exist between evaluation data and planned staff development? U6</p>	<p><b>Administrator: B2 Brian</b>                      11. What links exist between evaluation data and planned staff development? U6</p>
No links	Data evaluated by site and division and staff development implemented during summer professional development days
<b>Evaluation Process Promotes Professional Growth</b>	
<p><b>Teacher: B1 Bard</b>                      12. How does the evaluation process promote your professional growth? F1/F2</p>	<p><b>Administrator: B2 Brian</b>                      12. How does the evaluation process promote the professional growth of teachers with varying skills and experience levels? F1/F2</p>
Evaluation process allows teachers to choose projects to pursue	Promote growth by creating goals; Teacher observation form in the category of "Professional Growth"
<b>Evaluation Accurately Assesses Job Performance/Theatre</b>	
<p><b>Teacher: B1 Bard</b>                      13. To what degree does your current evaluation process accurately assess your job performance? A1/P5</p>	<p><b>Administrator: B2 Brian</b>                      13. To what degree does your current evaluation process accurately assess the job performance of theatre arts teachers? A1/P5</p>
Not accurate/subjective especially if administrator does not understand theatre	Not accurate/highly subjective
<b>Information Generated From Evaluations Shared with Teachers</b>	

<b>Teacher: B1 Bard</b>	<b>Administrator: B2 Brian</b>
(Question was asked of administrators only)	14. How is information generated from teacher observations and job performance documented and shared with teachers? A4 Written narrative/memorandums generated is shared with teachers in formal/informal conferences
<b>Confidentiality of Teacher Performance Reviews</b>	
<b>Teacher: B1 Bard</b>	<b>Administrator: B2 Brian</b>
15. What procedures are in place to ensure the confidentiality of teacher performance reviews? A7	15. What procedures are in place to ensure the confidentiality of teacher performance reviews? A7
Completed summative evaluation reports are placed in teacher mailboxes	Files are stamped 'confidential' All files are handled by administrators and school personnel at the central office
<b>Ensuring Objectivity in the Evaluation Process</b>	
<b>Teacher: B1 Bard</b>	<b>Administrator: B2 Brian</b>
16. How does the performance evaluation protocol ensure objectivity in the evaluation process? A8	16. How does the performance evaluation protocol ensure objectivity in the evaluation process? A8
It does not/completely subjective	Teacher evaluation forms are written to be objective but can be used/interpreted subjectively

*The Evaluation Process used by the School District.* In the case of Bard and Brian, evaluation was determined on the number of years a teacher was employed in the district. Because Bard was a tenured teacher with a certain number of years, he was currently being evaluated on the “B” track. “A” track and “B” track were different as one included a portfolio and portfolio review and the other track included teacher observation throughout the year and a summative evaluation report at the conclusion of the school year. Bard preferred the portfolio over observation and reported:

For me, it opens doors for me because I can choose a project—so I can collaborate with another teacher on a project or I can look at diversity as a project...maybe I’ll look at these projects and use that as a way to bring more African-American students into the theatre program. Why are they not involved?

However, when asked if the portfolio as a tool was able to better evaluate him based on the procedures in the process he remarked, “No, that’s just me. And that’s what I make out of my own evaluation.”

*Policies and Procedures.* The pattern of how interactions with evaluators/evaluatees are handled appeared throughout the interviews with Brian and Bard in terms of all aspects of evaluation, including policy and procedures. Bard served as the head of his department (fine arts) and Brian often found himself relying on Bard to communicate with him regarding the specific needs of the fine arts program. Brian commented, “You know, I’m learning from them and they are learning from me.” However, in the past, things had not gone smoothly for Bard in terms of being evaluated. He described a past experience with a previous administrator who evaluated him:

You’re going to laugh at this but I am dead serious as to how this happened: he came in. He walked over to my desk and looked at my lesson plan. I told him a little bit about what we were doing with mime and what not and had the kids break into groups. They were working and I went around observing. And I kept looking back and looking up. We are in kind of a pit so the stage is down below—it’s kind of like an amphitheatre but it’s really small. I kept looking up at my desk and he wasn’t even looking at me—he was looking at the computer. He was in there for probably twenty or twenty-five minutes for the most--this is a ninety minute class--and then he closed his book, he looked at me, looked around the room, waved and got up and left. And he was supposed to be there for the entire class period. Usually if they are going to be in there for the whole class period they tell you that they are coming so you can be prepared. And that’s what

they do. And I was like what in the world is he doing? I went up there and he was looking at eBay! He was on the account the whole majority of time he was there because I went and looked my history and I was like you've got to be kidding me!?

Bard described some positive changes that took place once Brian arrived but still felt that he was misunderstood:

I know that a lot of the weaknesses that they put down for me I'm going to get. They are going to put down there "professional dress" because many times I will just come in wearing slacks and a polo shirt and I won't have a tie on because either I'm painting that day or I'm doing something. And they don't know that. And they constantly want you in a tie the whole time. Yeah, it has an impact on my psyche. It's a drag. It's a constant uphill battle.

These statements by Bard reflect the findings of the study conducted by the Secondary Theatre Project sponsored by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign that defined five "crucial qualitative factors" for secondary theatre education (Seidel, 1991, p. 17). In order of their perceived significance to students, they were: the teacher; the policies and practices of the school district administration; dramatic production; community environment; and the theatre curriculum (Seidel, 1991). These factors are inextricably linked and yet there appears that the first two most important factors, teachers and administrators, are disconnected through significant types of policies and practices (Seidel, 1991).

In answering interview questions regarding how the evaluation process differentiated among teacher levels of performances and experiences, Brian admitted that he had no knowledge of the fine arts or how to evaluate his theatre art teacher:

I am the person that is in charge of the fine arts department and I'm also in charge of working with the mathematics department—two areas that I have no prior knowledge in terms of working with those areas. Because I was a social studies person. I've been working with those departments for two years.

*Training and Staff Development in Regards to the Evaluation Process.* Both Bard and Brian reported that there was no training to understand the evaluation system; Brian also reported that his training from the college he was currently attending was his greatest source of information for using any evaluation system. Additionally, *he* commented that most of the division training for teachers was based on the results of student test scores and not based on evaluation scores even though he considered this link “huge”.

*Impact, Professional Growth, and Ensuring Objectivity in the Evaluation Process.* Brian revealed that the process of evaluation was left to the discretion of the administrator and that little or no knowledge could be problematic for administrators when evaluating theatre teachers:

It can be subjective in many regards in terms of I think this is a weaknesses. But making sense of information sometimes takes (time). I am one of those people who believe that everything can be subjective to a degree—but when you sit down and you reflect upon it with the person who is across from you, you are making sense of information; you are coming to some kind of truth and you are arriving at it together. But you are expert as the administrator, so you've got to



lay it all out on the table. It may be that you arrived at the particular thing by some subjective means, but when you really articulate it and lay it all out, you are both agreeing that this is an issue, this is a problem. And if the teacher can't articulate to you why it's not a problem then of course the teacher is at a loss.

Bard knew these problematic experiences well. These findings reflect the earlier literature discussed. Peterson (2000) stated practice of evaluation is one of the most important factors for communicating professional goals and expectations to teachers via administration. Bard commented that he continued to do his best regardless of the results of his evaluations.

*Case Three: Clay and Catherine*

Clay and Catherine had worked together for eight years in a large urban school for the performing arts. The school had two theatre teachers: one theatre teacher handled musical theatre and the other teacher, Clay, taught straight or non-musical theatre. Students who attended this public school in Virginia had to audition in order to attend. Catherine served as the center's director and was in charge of evaluation for all of the performing arts teachers. She herself had a background in music and taught chorus before becoming the center's director; she also held a Bachelor's Degree and a Master's in Education. Clay holds a Bachelor's in Education and was a professional theatre practitioner before becoming a teacher and educational foundations and strategies were difficult for him:

See, I'm not a teacher, I just play one on TV, and I came in from, as a professional practitioner and then picked up the education classes once I started

teaching...so I don't know how it's supposed to happen. So I had to learn all the acronyms and I had to figure out what Bloom's Taxonomy was on the fly.

Because theirs was a school of the arts, Clay balanced his teaching responsibilities with production responsibilities and performances that ran throughout the year but became especially intense during the spring as the end of the year approached.

Throughout the years, Clay described his admiration for Catherine and referred to their informal and collegial relationship throughout the interview.

A comparison table for Clay and Catherine reveals the condensed responses, listed by question order with the theatre arts teacher's responses listed on the left as Clay. Following the table is a discussion based on the findings.

Table 14: Case Three—Clay and Catherine  
Overview of Theatre Teacher/Administrator Condensed Responses Arranged by Interview Questions

<b>Evaluation Process</b>	
<b>Teacher: C1 Clay</b> 1. Describe the evaluation process from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.	<b>Administrator: C2 Catherine</b> 1. Describe the evaluation process from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.
Teacher observation by administrator Personal Growth Plan	Teacher observation by administrator four times a year
<b>Evaluation Instruments/Tools</b>	
<b>Teacher: C1 Clay</b> 1a. Describe the tools or instruments included in the procedures.	<b>Administrator: C1 Catherine</b> 1a. Describe the tools or instruments included in the procedures.
Focus of Continuous Improvement Plan Teacher observation form	Teacher observation form scripting/commendations and recommendations
<b>Informed of Evaluation Procedures</b>	
<b>Teacher: C1 Clay</b> 1b. How are you informed of these procedures? U2	<b>Administrator: C1 Catherine</b> 1b. How were you informed of these procedures? U2
Not informed	Policy determined by principal
<b>Duties and Expectations/Job Description</b>	

<p><b>Teacher: C1 Clay</b> 2. What are the required duties and expectations of your job defined by your job description? P2/A2</p>	<p><b>Administrator: C1 Catherine</b></p>
<p>No job description/general classroom teacher only found in contract</p>	<p>(Question was asked of theatre arts teachers only)</p>
<p><b>Evaluation Process Addresses Strengths and Weaknesses</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: C1 Clay</b> 3. Describe how your evaluation process addresses strengths and weaknesses for those being evaluated. A9/P5</p>	<p><b>Administrator: C1 Catherine</b> 3. Describe how your evaluation process addresses strengths and weaknesses for those being evaluated. A9/P5</p>
<p>Not addressed in the teacher evaluation form Asks administrator for direction in determining strengths and weaknesses</p>	<p>Addressed in the evaluator's comments Uses personal experience to determine strengths and weaknesses (arts background)</p>
<p><b>Follows Legal Guidelines</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: C1 Clay</b></p>	<p><b>Administrator: C1 Catherine</b> 4. How do you ensure that evaluation data of theatre arts teachers follows legal guidelines and is conducted in a confidential manner? P3</p>
<p>(Question was asked of administrators only)</p>	<p>Follows county policy/Personnel binder</p>
<p><b>Performance Reviews Conducted Professionally/Constructively</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: C1 Clay</b></p>	<p><b>Administrator: C1 Catherine</b> 4a. What processes are in place to ensure that performance reviews are conducted in a professional and constructive manner? P3</p>
<p>(Question was asked of administrators only)</p>	<p>As director of center (Catherine herself) determined these when program began/casual but effective</p>
<p><b>Results of Employee Appraisals are Communicated</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: C1 Clay</b> 5. Describe the manner in which the results of employee appraisals are communicated. (formal conference, report in your mailbox, etc.) P4/A3</p>	<p><b>Administrator: C1 Catherine</b> 5. Describe the manner in which the results of employee appraisals are communicated. (formal conference, report in your mailbox, etc.) P4/A3</p>
<p>Informal conference/email contact</p>	<p>Drafts a formal copy; follows up with informal conference</p>
<p><b>Evaluation Process Differentiates Teacher Levels</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: C1 Clay</b></p>	<p><b>Administrator: C1 Catherine</b> 6. How does the evaluation process differentiate among teacher levels of performance and experiences? P5/P7</p>

(Question was asked of administrators only)	Process does not differentiate/administrator's use of the tool is determining factor Professional Growth Plan for struggling teachers
<b>Look fors and Red Flags</b>	
<b>Teacher: C1 Clay</b>	<b>Administrator: C1 Catherine</b>
	6a. Describe your "look-fors" and "red flags" in the teacher evaluation process.
(Question was asked of administrators only)	Look fors: evidence of planning Curriculum and content Use of Quia site Objectives on the board  Red flags: student discipline/classroom management
<b>Impact of Evaluation</b>	
<b>Teacher: C1 Clay</b>	<b>Administrator: C1 Catherine</b>
7. What impact does the evaluation have on your teaching? U1	
Helps with classroom management but not content	(Question was asked of theatre arts teachers only)
<b>Training to Implement /Understand Evaluation System</b>	
<b>Teacher: C1 Clay</b>	<b>Administrator: C1 Catherine</b>
9. What training did you receive in order to understand the evaluation system? U3/U5	8. What training did you receive to implement the evaluation system? U3/U5
9a. Describe that training. U3/U5	8a. Describe that training. U3/U5
No training	Training through classes taken while acquiring her master's degree; no training through county
<b>Differentiation Unrelated Job Descriptions</b>	
<b>Teacher: C1 Clay</b>	<b>Administrator: C1 Catherine</b>
10. How does your evaluation process differentiate between the job performance of teachers with unrelated job descriptions, such as classroom teachers and theatre teachers? U4	10. How does your evaluation process differentiate between the job performance of teachers with unrelated job descriptions, such as classroom teachers and theatre teachers? U4
No differentiation	Uncertain
<b>Links Between Evaluation Data and Staff Development</b>	
<b>Teacher: C1 Clay</b>	<b>Administrator: C1 Catherine</b>
11. What links exist between evaluation data and planned staff development? U6	11. What links exist between evaluation data and planned staff development? U6
No links	No links—top down decision in staff development

<b>Evaluation Process Promotes Professional Growth</b>	
<b>Teacher: C1 Clay</b> 12. How does the evaluation process promote your professional growth? F1/F2	<b>Administrator: C1 Catherine</b> 12. How does the evaluation process promote the professional growth of teachers with varying skills and experience levels? F1/F2
Clay attempts to apply class management suggestions in classroom	It does not promote professional growth. Catherine attempts to make up for that by promoting a collegial atmosphere so all can learn and work together
<b>Evaluation Accurately Assesses Job Performance/Theatre</b>	
<b>Teacher: C1 Clay</b> 13. To what degree does your current evaluation process accurately assess your job performance? A1/P5	<b>Administrator: C1 Catherine</b> 13. To what degree does your current evaluation process accurately assess the job performance of theatre arts teachers? A1/P5
The accuracy comes in the form of the administrator's use of the tools	Uncertain. Catherine's use of the tool as opposed to the tool itself is the determining factor of accuracy
<b>Information Generated From Evaluations Shared with Teachers</b>	
<b>Teacher: C1 Clay</b>	<b>Administrator: C1 Catherine</b> 14. How is information generated from teacher observations and job performance documented and shared with teachers? A4
(Question was asked of administrators only)	Email is generated and then shared with teachers in formal/informal conferences
<b>Confidentiality of Teacher Performance Reviews</b>	
<b>Teacher: C1 Clay</b> 15. What procedures are in place to ensure the confidentiality of teacher performance reviews? A7	<b>Administrator: C1 Catherine</b> 15. What procedures are in place to ensure the confidentiality of teacher performance reviews? A7
Uncertain but believes no one has access to the files of others	Conferences to discuss summative evaluation reports are discussed behind closed doors All files are handled by administrators and school personnel at the central office
<b>Ensuring Objectivity in the Evaluation Process</b>	
<b>Teacher: C1 Clay</b> 16. How does the performance evaluation protocol ensure objectivity in the evaluation process? A8	<b>Administrator: C1 Catherine</b> 16. How does the performance evaluation protocol ensure objectivity in the evaluation process? A8

Teacher evaluation form is subjective; the administrator's use of the evaluation form is also based on subjectivity Based on trust	Created by Catherine herself Subjective
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*The Evaluation Process used by the School District.* Clay and Catherine described a process that did not apply to the needs of theatre teacher evaluation.

Balanced/unbalanced evaluations, as a pattern was evident in these interviews. Both Clay and Catherine commented on the inapplicability of their evaluation process to theatre teachers throughout the interviews. Catherine said, "(The county) used a check-off list that had nothing to do...content-wise or with the curriculum..."

Clay described similar frustrations:

I'm supposed to be evaluated by my assistant principal, but she's also in charge of laptop distribution, and attendance and she is one of the most overbooked assistant principals that we have and so she's—I don't think she's observed me maybe once or twice and she's apologized and says, I know you are doing a good job there and so I'm not too worried and um, does her thing. But my boss...she ends up being the one who observes me. She is the head of the Center for the Arts. So she's the one who does the evaluations.

The evaluation process included observation and the tools used in the process were described as paper and pen by both Clay and Catherine.

*Policies and Procedures.* Clay said that he was not informed of evaluation procedures, whereas Catherine said that she had been doing evaluations as long as she could remember but thought that originally she had been told in departmental meetings when she first began working there.

When asked about the required duties and expectations of his job, Clay reported that his contract describes a general classroom teacher in terms of responsibilities. Clay said that he relied on Catherine for written feedback through scripting and Catherine reported that her “commendations and recommendations” through scripting were what teachers found most helpful—both regarded a written “check-list” as not being helpful in the evaluation process.

Both Clay and Catherine agreed that district policy ensured that legal guidelines were followed in evaluation procedures. Results of employee appraisals were communicated through conferences and email correspondence. They also concurred that all of these policies and communications surrounding evaluation were confidential

*Training and Staff Development in Regards to the Evaluation Process.* Even though Clay and Catherine taught in a performing arts high school, the training was still what Catherine called, “top-down”. Both she and Clay also concluded that there were no links between evaluation data and planned staff development. Catherine commented that she gleaned the most information from classes that she took while earning her master’s degree.

*Impact, Professional Growth and Ensuring Objectivity in the Evaluation Process.* The working relationship between Clay and Catherine was one of the most important aspects of this team. Clay trusted and appreciated Catherine and therefore any feedback that he received from Catherine did not affect him in a negative way, even if that feedback required that he make improvements. However, Catherine herself admitted to creating the evaluation protocol and that it was subjective and perhaps had its flaws. She stated:

Well, objectivity, this is where it's like all things art. This is where my rubric comes in because this is where when I go into the lesson....now maybe I can make an instrument that you know, has an outline of these are things that I am looking for before I go. And maybe this is a great wake up call for me to be more specific.

And Clay had his doubts about the process, "It's a trust thing, I guess. I mean you have to trust that the person who is going to you evaluate you to be objective. I've never had a bad review and it's always been a positive response from my evaluations...if you look at the form, the form is subjective." Which led to this comment from Clay regarding the nature of evaluation, "A classroom teacher is evaluated the same as a theatre teacher. Other than the fact that it's Catherine and she knows the arts better than others would...she knows what she is looking for. So it's the person that makes that difference and not the forms." In the case of Clay and Catherine, their interactions positively affected the outcomes of the evaluation process. This pattern, the influence of interactions between administrators and evaluatees was prevalent throughout the interviews with Clay and Catherine.

*Case Four: David and Debra*

In the case of David and Debra, both had worked at their large suburban high school for years. David held a Bachelor's of Fine Arts degree in Theatre Education. David had been with the school for eight years, while Debra had been in the school since 1992 but with the same district for over thirty years. Debra held a Master's in Education. Both had a mutual respect for each other. David was an award-winning theatre teacher and Debra was an assistant principal who evaluated not only the performing arts but other



areas such as the English department and the library staff as well. A discussion of the case of David and Debra follows the table outlining the condensed responses arranged by interview question, below.

Table 15: Case Four—David and Debra  
 Overview of Theatre Teacher/Administrator Condensed Responses Arranged by Interview Questions

<b>Evaluation Process</b>	
<b>Teacher: D1 David</b>	<b>Administrator: D2 Debra</b>
1. Describe the evaluation process from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.	1. Describe the evaluation process from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.
Teacher observation by administrator two or three times a year Performance targets are determined	Teacher observation by administrator three times a year Performance targets are submitted and followed up on in March
<b>Evaluation Instruments/Tools</b>	
<b>Teacher: D1 David</b>	<b>Administrator: D2 Debra</b>
1a. Describe the tools or instruments included in the procedures.	1a. Describe the tools or instruments included in the procedures.
Teacher observation form Scripting	Teacher performance target sheet Scripting
<b>Informed of Evaluation Procedures</b>	
<b>Teacher: D1 David</b>	<b>Administrator: D2 Debra</b>
1b. How are you informed of these procedures? U2	1b. How were you informed of these procedures? U2
Pre-conference with administrator	Policy determined by principal/county Administrative retreat in August (before school year begins)
<b>Duties and Expectations/Job Description</b>	
<b>Teacher: D1 David</b>	<b>Administrator: D2 Debra</b>
2. What are the required duties and expectations of your job defined by your job description? P2/A2	
Determined by contract Extra responsibilities came from management of auditorium space that later developed into an additional paid job	(Question was asked of theatre arts teachers only)
<b>Evaluation Process Addresses Strengths and Weaknesses</b>	
<b>Teacher: D1 David</b>	<b>Administrator: D2 Debra</b>
3. Describe how your evaluation process addresses strengths and weaknesses for those being evaluated. A9/P5	3. Describe how your evaluation process addresses strengths and weaknesses for those being evaluated. A9/P5

Determined by the subjectivity of the administrator	Addressed in the evaluator's comments (scripting)
<b>Follows Legal Guidelines</b>	
<b>Teacher: D1 David</b>	<b>Administrator: D2 Debra</b> 4. How do you ensure that evaluation data of theatre arts teachers follows legal guidelines and is conducted in a confidential manner? P3
(Question was asked of administrators only)	Follows county policy
<b>Performance Reviews Conducted Professionally/Constructively</b>	
<b>Teacher: D1 David</b>	<b>Administrator: D2 Debra</b> 4a. What processes are in place to ensure that performance reviews are conducted in a professional and constructive manner? P3
(Question was asked of administrators only)	Discretion of administrator "It's in the communication piece"
<b>Results of Employee Appraisals are Communicated</b>	
<b>Teacher: D1 David</b> 5. Describe the manner in which the results of employee appraisals are communicated. (formal conference, report in your mailbox, etc.) P4/A3	<b>Administrator: D2 Debra</b> 5. Describe the manner in which the results of employee appraisals are communicated. (formal conference, report in your mailbox, etc.) P4/A3
Formal conference followed by signed copies of summative evaluation form distributed	Evaluation is written up Formal conference followed by signed copies of summative evaluation form distributed
<b>Evaluation Process Differentiates Teacher Levels</b>	
<b>Teacher: D1 David</b>	<b>Administrator: D2 Debra</b> 6. How does the evaluation process differentiate among teacher levels of performance and experiences? P5/P7
(Question was asked of administrators only)	Process does not differentiate/administrator's use of the tool is determining factor
<b>Look fors and Red Flags</b>	
<b>Teacher: D1 David</b>	<b>Administrator: D2 Debra</b> 6a. Describe your "look-fors" and "red flags" in the teacher evaluation process.
(Question was asked of administrators only)	Look fors: Time on task, addressing student discipline immediately  Red flags: poor classroom management, teachers who do most of the talking
<b>Impact of Evaluation</b>	

<p><b>Teacher: D1 David</b> 7. What impact does the evaluation have on your teaching? U1</p>	<p><b>Administrator: D2 Debra</b></p>
<p>No long term effects unless the evaluation is poor then it affects psyche</p>	<p>(Question was asked of theatre arts teachers only)</p>
<p><b>Training to Implement /Understand Evaluation System</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: D1 David</b> 9. What training did you receive in order to understand the evaluation system? U3/U5 9a. Describe that training. U3/U5</p>	<p><b>Administrator: D2 Debra</b> 8. What training did you receive to implement the evaluation system? U3/U5 8a. Describe that training. U3/U5</p>
<p>Cannot recall training unless it was addressed during the new teacher workshops</p>	<p>Training to learn scripting techniques Peer coaching Clinical supervision model</p>
<p><b>Differentiation Unrelated Job Descriptions</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: D1 David</b> 10. How does your evaluation process differentiate between the job performance of teachers with unrelated job descriptions, such as classroom teachers and theatre teachers? U4</p>	<p><b>Administrator: D2 Debra</b> 10. How does your evaluation process differentiate between the job performance of teachers with unrelated job descriptions, such as classroom teachers and theatre teachers? U4</p>
<p>No differentiation</p>	<p>No differentiation</p>
<p><b>Links Between Evaluation Data and Staff Development</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: D1 David</b> 11. What links exist between evaluation data and planned staff development? U6</p>	<p><b>Administrator: D2 Debra</b> 11. What links exist between evaluation data and planned staff development? U6</p>
<p>No links</p>	<p>No links—based on test scores and not evaluation data</p>
<p><b>Evaluation Process Promotes Professional Growth</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: D1 David</b> 12. How does the evaluation process promote your professional growth? F1/F2</p>	<p><b>Administrator: D2 Debra</b> 12. How does the evaluation process promote the professional growth of teachers with varying skills and experience levels? F1/F2</p>
<p>Evaluation process does not promote professional growth</p>	<p>Professional growth is not determined by evaluation but instead administrator communication/goals are determined by superintendent and administrators</p>
<p><b>Evaluation Accurately Assesses Job Performance/Theatre</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: D1 David</b> 13. To what degree does your current evaluation process accurately assess your job performance? A1/P5</p>	<p><b>Administrator: D2 Debra</b> 13. To what degree does your current evaluation process accurately assess the job performance of theatre arts teachers? A1/P5</p>

Not accurate/determined by personal goals set by teacher	Determined by the end product (performance/final show) as opposed to the process that a theatre teacher uses
<b>Information Generated From Evaluations Shared with Teachers</b>	
<b>Teacher: D1 David</b>	<b>Administrator: D2 Debra</b>
	14. How is information generated from teacher observations and job performance documented and shared with teachers? A4
(Question was asked of administrators only)	Keeps a file for each teacher/department Summative evaluation forms generated are shared with teachers in formal/informal conferences
<b>Confidentiality of Teacher Performance Reviews</b>	
<b>Teacher: D1 David</b>	<b>Administrator: D2 Debra</b>
15. What procedures are in place to ensure the confidentiality of teacher performance reviews? A7	15. What procedures are in place to ensure the confidentiality of teacher performance reviews? A7
Conducted in an office setting; filed in office	Evaluations are discussed behind closed doors All files are handled by administrators and school personnel at the central office
<b>Ensuring Objectivity in the Evaluation Process</b>	
<b>Teacher: D1 David</b>	<b>Administrator: D2 Debra</b>
16. How does the performance evaluation protocol ensure objectivity in the evaluation process? A8	16. How does the performance evaluation protocol ensure objectivity in the evaluation process? A8
“Objectivity through the use of many perspectives”	Objective because it is scripted and the administrator writes down only what he/she sees

*The Evaluation Process used by the School District.* The evaluation process for David and Debra included a pre-conference, teacher observation, and post-conference. Administrators observed the teachers in their charge several times during the year and supplemented the formal observations with walk-throughs, as described by Downey. The interest of informal observation has heightened recently with the refinement of the Downey Walk-Through, in which administrators make several informal observations per

day, spending between three and five minutes in a classroom (Downey, Steffy, English, Frase, & Poston, 2004).

In addition to their class responsibilities, teachers also had departmental and personal goals that they were to achieve by the end of the school year. Debra explained part of the process:

There is a deadline and a time frame that we give them to submit their performance targets to us and they're signed off on and then from that point, all during the year, they can work on them. At the end of the year, they indicate their degree of accomplishment, whether they exceeded expectation, met expectation, did not meet expectation...they meet with us at, they meet with me, at the end of the year and we talk about it. But the bottom line is I should be seeing that when I do their observation...I should see they how they've implemented the goals.

David described the process similarly, but did not agree with Debra that the goals would be present during an observation by an administrator, stating:

I know that for the first couple of years I made one of my goals to emphasize interdisciplinary studies tying together theatre with other subject areas so what I would do is include a handout or a worksheet that would relate say, set design to mathematics or relate lighting to physics, or electricity studies, and so that would be my documentation. In theory this is supposed to go along with the observation...but it's almost like they are two different things and they all go in with the final evaluation at the end of the year.

*Policies and Procedures.* David and Debra agreed that the procedures set in place at their high school ensured confidential performance reviews and that district policy was

followed to ensure that the evaluation data followed legal guidelines. However, David did not feel that the evaluation had any impact on him unless it was a poor evaluation, in which case he said that it would make him “worry”. How interactions with evaluatees and evaluators are handled as a pattern was evident in these interviews.

Regarding how strengths and weaknesses are addressed in the evaluation system, David responded by saying, “As far as the growth and such, whichever administrator is observing me at the time, will usually give me positives and then something to grow on. So it’s up to administrators to like observe something that they see that they want me to watch out for.”

*Training and Staff Development in Regards to the Evaluation Process.* David did not recall having ever received training to understand the evaluation system; he commented that it may have been covered at the in-service provided to new teachers upon being hired in the district. Debra described a very lengthy process:

Well first of all we all had to go through the peer coaching process. When we began the clinical supervision model that we’re using, we had to go through a training process—we had to go through several sessions and even now, teachers who go through that process now they get ninety recertification points...and they can either take it for the points, ninety points, or they can pay a little bit more for it and get credit for it, college credit for it. We started out with all the administrators once we went to the clinical supervision model—all of us had to be trained. So we were trained first. Then we went to department chairs and then they were all trained during the school year—but it requires a lot of money because of substitute teachers because you had to have two to three people in the

building and you think about all the schools in the county sending someone—so it was quite expensive...

Both David and Debra concluded that there were no link between evaluation data and planned staff development. Instead, Debra commented that staff development was driven by district policy and that "...it's all tied in based on what we're trying to achieve as a school."

*Impact, Professional Growth and Ensuring Objectivity in the Evaluation Process.*

David concluded that there were no opportunities for professional growth within the evaluation system; Debra commented that it was the administrator's job to determine what areas of growth were needed for their teachers. She commented that this could be problematic for those who did not understand the nature of the subject matter.

Initially, both David and Debra concluded that the evaluation process was objective, but further discussion into the topic gave them pause to reconsider. When asked, "To what degree does your current evaluation process accurately assess your job performance", David responded by joking:

I think that it is fairly accurate because I've good reviews...except for that one guy who didn't know what he was talking about (laughs). But any time you base something off of performance targets based set for the year and a couple of observations throughout the year, it's kind of hard to say that it's accurate.

Subjectivity is also the topic of discussion throughout both interviews. Debra believed that she was being objective, "Well, I think the script is pretty objective—I mean I can only write down what I see." And later when asked how does the evaluation process differentiated between the job performance of teachers with unrelated job

descriptions, such as classroom teachers and theatre teachers, she stated, "...well to me, a classroom teacher is a classroom teacher whether they teach theatre arts or whatever... Why would it be any different?"

*Case Five: Emily and Erica*

Emily and Erica worked in a high school that had only been in existence for five years and was in a primarily rural area. Emily held a Bachelor’s Degree in Theatre Education and a Master’s in Teaching. Emily had taught for a total of eight years and was the only theatre teacher that had ever taught at this new high school. Erica, Emily’s administrator, was new to the professional of administration and had only served as an assistant principal for two years. Emily had a Master’s in Education and had previously been a teacher.

A comparison table for Emily and Erica reveals the condensed responses, listed by question order with the theatre arts teacher’s responses listed on the left as Emily. A description of these findings is discussed following the table; emergent patterns are discussed as well.

Table 16: Case Five—Emily and Erica  
 Overview of Theatre Teacher/Administrator Condensed Responses Arranged by Interview Questions

<b>Evaluation Process</b>	
<b>Teacher: E1 Emily</b>	<b>Administrator: E2 Erica</b>
1. Describe the evaluation process from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.	1. Describe the evaluation process from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.
Teacher observation by administrator two times a year followed by conference	Walk-throughs several times a year Pre-conference, post-conference and observation two or three times a year
<b>Evaluation Instruments/Tools</b>	
<b>Teacher: E1 Emily</b>	<b>Administrator: E2 Erica</b>
1a. Describe the tools or instruments included in the procedures.	1a. Describe the tools or instruments included in the procedures.



Teacher observation forms/"check list" Scripting	Teacher observation forms/scripting/"check list" created by Erica herself Email communication
<b>Informed of Evaluation Procedures</b>	
<b>Teacher: E1 Emily</b> 1b. How are you informed of these procedures? U2	<b>Administrator: E2 Erica</b> 1b. How were you informed of these procedures? U2
Not informed until evaluation began	Professional development training for all administrators that describes procedures and how to use them
<b>Duties and Expectations/Job Description</b>	
<b>Teacher: E1 Emily</b> 2. What are the required duties and expectations of your job defined by your job description? P2/A2	<b>Administrator: E2 Erica</b>
No job description	(Question was asked of theatre arts teachers only)
<b>Evaluation Process Addresses Strengths and Weaknesses</b>	
<b>Teacher: E1 Emily</b> 3. Describe how your evaluation process addresses strengths and weaknesses for those being evaluated. A9/P5	<b>Administrator: E2 Erica</b> 3. Describe how your evaluation process addresses strengths and weaknesses for those being evaluated. A9/P5
Meets expectations or does not meet expectations based on discretion of administrator	Addressed in the evaluator's comments; Administrator follows county policy to incorporate the correct number of suggestions for improvement and commendation
<b>Follows Legal Guidelines</b>	
<b>Teacher: E1 Emily</b>	<b>Administrator: E2 Erica</b> 4. How do you ensure that evaluation data of theatre arts teachers follows legal guidelines and is conducted in a confidential manner? P3
(Question was asked of administrators only)	At the discretion of administrator
<b>Performance Reviews Conducted Professionally/Constructively</b>	
<b>Teacher: E1 Emily</b>	<b>Administrator: E2 Erica</b> 4a. What processes are in place to ensure that performance reviews are conducted in a professional and constructive manner? P3
(Question was asked of administrators only)	County policy; shared with teachers in advance
<b>Results of Employee Appraisals are Communicated</b>	

<p><b>Teacher: E1 Emily</b>                      5. Describe the manner in which the results of employee appraisals are communicated. (formal conference, report in your mailbox, etc.) P4/A3</p>	<p><b>Administrator: E2 Erica</b>                      5. Describe the manner in which the results of employee appraisals are communicated. (formal conference, report in your mailbox, etc.) P4/A3</p>
<p>Formal post-conference; scripting is shared but teacher does not keep it                      Teacher signs summative evaluation form</p>	<p>Formal conference where summative evaluation forms are signed and copied for employees</p>
<p><b>Evaluation Process Differentiates Teacher Levels</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: E1 Emily</b></p>	<p><b>Administrator: E2 Erica</b>                      6. How does the evaluation process differentiate among teacher levels of performance and experiences? P5/P7</p>
<p>(Question was asked of administrators only)</p>	<p>Process does not differentiate</p>
<p><b>Look fors and Red Flags</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: E1 Emily</b></p>	<p><b>Administrator: E2 Erica</b>                      6a. Describe your “look-fors” and “red flags” in the teacher evaluation process.</p>
<p>(Question was asked of administrators only)</p>	<p>Look fors: differentiated instruction; using higher level questioning; rapport with students                       Red flags: poor classroom management.</p>
<p><b>Impact of Evaluation</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: E1 Emily</b>                      7. What impact does the evaluation have on your teaching? U1</p>	<p><b>Administrator: E2 Erica</b></p>
<p>“Little to none”</p>	<p>(Question was asked of theatre arts teachers only)</p>
<p><b>Training to Implement /Understand Evaluation System</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: E1 Emily</b>                      9. What training did you receive in order to understand the evaluation system? U3/U5                      9a. Describe that training. U3/U5</p>	<p><b>Administrator: E2 Erica</b>                      8. What training did you receive to implement the evaluation system? U3/U5                      8a. Describe that training. U3/U5</p>
<p>No training</p>	<p>Erica participated as a peer coach when she was a teacher and applied it to her work as an administrator</p>
<p><b>Differentiation Unrelated Job Descriptions</b></p>	

<p><b>Teacher: E1 Emily</b>                  10. How does your evaluation process differentiate between the job performance of teachers with unrelated job descriptions, such as classroom teachers and theatre teachers? U4</p>	<p><b>Administrator: E2 Erica</b>                  10. How does your evaluation process differentiate between the job performance of teachers with unrelated job descriptions, such as classroom teachers and theatre teachers? U4</p>
<p>No differentiation</p>	<p>No differentiation; administrators attempt to differentiate through use of scripting</p>
<p align="center"><b>Links Between Evaluation Data and Staff Development</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: E1 Emily</b>                  11. What links exist between evaluation data and planned staff development? U6</p>	<p><b>Administrator: E2 Erica</b>                  11. What links exist between evaluation data and planned staff development? U6</p>
<p>No links</p>	<p>No links currently; county in process of remodeling uses for evaluation data</p>
<p align="center"><b>Evaluation Process Promotes Professional Growth</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: E1 Emily</b>                  12. How does the evaluation process promote your professional growth? F1/F2</p>	<p><b>Administrator: E2 Erica</b>                  12. How does the evaluation process promote the professional growth of teachers with varying skills and experience levels? F1/F2</p>
<p>Evaluation process does not promote professional growth</p>	<p>Attempts to promote growth by sharing scripting "glows and grows" with teacher</p>
<p align="center"><b>Evaluation Accurately Assesses Job Performance/Theatre</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: E1 Emily</b>                  13. To what degree does your current evaluation process accurately assess your job performance? A1/P5</p>	<p><b>Administrator: E2 Erica</b>                  13. To what degree does your current evaluation process accurately assess the job performance of theatre arts teachers? A1/P5</p>
<p>Not accurate/administrators need to see more than what one class experience will reveal</p>	<p>Not accurate especially if administrator does not understand subject matter</p>
<p align="center"><b>Information Generated From Evaluations Shared with Teachers</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: E1 Emily</b></p>	<p><b>Administrator: E2 Erica</b>                  14. How is information generated from teacher observations and job performance documented and shared with teachers? A4</p>
<p>(Question was asked of administrators only)</p>	<p>Summative evaluation form (including scripting) generated is shared with teachers in formal conferences</p>
<p align="center"><b>Confidentiality of Teacher Performance Reviews</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: E1 Emily</b>                  15. What procedures are in place to ensure the confidentiality of teacher performance reviews? A7</p>	<p><b>Administrator: E2 Erica</b>                  15. What procedures are in place to ensure the confidentiality of teacher performance reviews? A7</p>

Copies of evaluations are placed in envelopes and placed in teacher mailboxes	Evaluations are discussed behind closed doors All files are handled by administrators and school personnel at the central office
<b>Ensuring Objectivity in the Evaluation Process</b>	
<b>Teacher: E1 Emily</b> 16. How does the performance evaluation protocol ensure objectivity in the evaluation process? A8	<b>Administrator: E2 Erica</b> 16. How does the performance evaluation protocol ensure objectivity in the evaluation process? A8
It is both objective and subjective	It does not/subjective

*The Evaluation Process used by the School District.* In the case of Emily and Erica, the evaluation process was based on observation with a pre-conference at the beginning of the year between the theatre arts teacher and their administrator and a post-conference following; scripting was used as a way to determine strengths and weaknesses in a teacher’s performance, with an administrator noting three strengths and one area of deficiency for a teacher to improve upon. The pattern of an unbalanced evaluation would appear throughout the interview process with Emily and Erica. Emily commend that she was not informed of evaluation procedures until the process began.

*Policies and Procedures.* As an administrator, Erica received training that was implemented county-wide. Part of the evaluation discussed in the training that Erica took part in was that of communicating the results of employee appraisals and she described the same process that Emily described which included a formal post-conference where evaluation forms were signed by teachers and copies were distributed at the conclusion of the post-conference. Though they both described the same process, Emily said that she wished notes (scripting by the administrator) were distributed.

Emily wished for other changes to the evaluation system as well. Emily echoed Erica’s sentiments that the fine arts were different than general education classes and should be treated accordingly, “I wish that for me the evaluation process was more

specific, it's not... I don't know if it's because they don't feel that it's as important evaluating me as the other teachers..."

*Training and Staff Development in Regards to the Evaluation Process.* Emily simply said that in terms of training to understand the evaluation system, there was "none". Erica explained that she had undergone peer coaching and had applied that to her administrative duties of teacher performance evaluation but that she had not been specifically trained to evaluate the teachers in her charge. She explained:

I was actually asked to do it (peer coach). And the people that were strong classroom teachers who were able to work with other teachers that needed help. And I have just used it for other things--which actually helped me to get where I am now.

When asked if she had any additional training specifically geared for evaluation, Erica replied, "No. The only, I mean the only thing that we did, there was nothing official, I mean we worked together as far as talking about things and bouncing ideas off of each other but nothing formal."

*Impact, Professional Growth and Ensuring Objectivity in the Evaluation Process:* The interaction between evaluatees/evaluators was an important aspect of the work between Emily and Erica. When asked: How does the performance evaluation protocol ensure objectivity in the evaluation process? Emily stated:

Rapport could be construed as subjective if you don't get along with that administrator. If they don't understand your discipline. If you are under the unfortunate circumstance of having an administrator that doesn't understand the value or see the value of your discipline then you are in trouble.

This pattern was repeated throughout the interview with both Emily and Erica. The researcher did not reveal to any participant whether or not she had interviewed the other participant of the “team”, nor did she reveal or share any responses. However, both Emily and Erica shared that they were working together at the time of the interviews on Emily’s upcoming musical production and Erica had volunteered to perform a major role in the production. Both agreed that Erica’s former background in music made the evaluation process better for both of them. But because they worked closely together beyond the scope of evaluator/evaluatee, a balanced or objective evaluation was not possible. Erica was very fond of Emily and this information was revealed in the interview process. Erica commented:

I’m a music person. I have an interest because I was in band and I did the musicals and all of that stuff, too. So it’s neat for me, as an administrator, and I’ve told my fine arts teachers, that it’s always so nice to see them out of a traditional classroom and to see them perform differently in a different type of classroom so it’s a different type of mind set that you have to get.

In terms of professional growth, Emily responded by saying, “I don’t know that it does. To be perfectly honest, I don’t think that it does.” A follow up question regarding aspects that Emily would like to see as part of the evaluation process in order to promote professional growth, revealed this response, “Sometimes they ask about the show, we do kind of talk about what they do see in the show and we’ll talk about it at lunch but as far as including that in my formal evaluation, it doesn’t show up in my evaluation. I’d like that to be included, I think.”

In response to that same question (Question 12, How does the evaluation process promote the professional growth of teachers with varying skills and experience levels?) Erica responded, “Well I think that, and it seems like it’s always going back to these glows and these grows...” This revealed a disconnect, as Emily responded early in the interview in response to another question that she did not receive scripting where suggestions could be found, stating, “I wish. I don’t know that I’ve ever gotten the additional pages that they write on.”

Both agreed that the evaluation process did not accurately assess the job performance of theatre teachers. Erica responded:

You know, I don’t think it’s very accurate, quite honestly. I think that there’s a better way. I think because that it doesn’t necessary specifics, I mean, I know that you are focusing on theatre, but there’s so many things that are within the fine arts within the curriculum and in the way that they handle a classroom that isn’t going to happen in a math classroom. Sometimes I find myself, quite honestly, going through that form going, OK, OK, this doesn’t apply or I’ll put a check, I guess...because it doesn’t seem to be thoroughly assessing what they are doing in the classroom. It sometimes doesn’t assess anything that they are doing at all.

And Emily concurred: “...it doesn’t work...they do see that we don’t just sit around in a circle doing weird things in a drama class...but if they are trying to figure out how effective I am at evaluating my students or conveying information to my students then they need to come back.

Finally, both Emily and Erica agreed that there was no objectivity in the evaluation process. Erica concluded, “I don’t know that they are objective. I think that

they are subjective based on who is evaluating.” In this case, she was evaluating Emily, and she was aware that she had a personal interest in the theatre and commented that she tried to make the current evaluation process, “fit into what I need it to do, or what I am trying to evaluate.”

*Case Six: Fiona and Frederick*

Problems with bias, interaction difficulties with evaluatees, and unbalanced evaluations were all common patterns that emerged within all of the cases. In many cases there were positive interactions between evaluators and evaluatees. In the case of Fiona and Frederick, there was a deep disconnect. Fiona and Frederick were employed in a magnet school for technology. Fiona had been employed at the school for five years and held a Master’s of Fine Arts in Acting. Frederick had been employed at the school since 1992 and served as a lead teacher for the fine arts and English. He held a Master’s in Education and a bachelor’s degree in English. A discussion of the case of Fiona and Frederick follows the comparison table of condensed responses, listed by question order with the theatre arts teacher’s responses listed on the left as Fiona. Along with the discussion, emergent patterns are disclosed as well.



Table 17: Case Six—Fiona and Frederick  
 Overview of Theatre Teacher/Administrator Condensed Responses Arranged by  
 Interview Questions

<b>Evaluation Process</b>	
<p><b>Teacher: F1 Fiona</b>                      1. Describe the evaluation process from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.</p>	<p><b>Administrator: F1 Frederick</b>                      1. Describe the evaluation process from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.</p>
<p>Teacher observation by administrator formally until after the third year then observation informally two or three times a year by lead teacher                      Portfolio for years one, two, three, six, nine twelve, fifteen and so forth</p>	<p>Teacher observation by lead teacher with predetermined expectations; evaluation forms completed to correspond                      Informal walk-throughs up to eight times a year</p>
<b>Evaluation Instruments/Tools</b>	
<p><b>Teacher: F1 Fiona</b>                      1a. Describe the tools or instruments included in the procedures.</p>	<p><b>Administrator: F1 Frederick</b>                      1a. Describe the tools or instruments included in the procedures.</p>
<p>Self-assessment form with four domains; Pre-conference then follow up with discussion of self-assessment; Summative evaluation form on ‘off years’; Handbook that describes portfolio—“summative book”</p>	<p>Teacher self-assessment form with domains; Evaluation check-list that is relatively new and needs ‘tweaking’</p>
<b>Informed of Evaluation Procedures</b>	
<p><b>Teacher: F1 Fiona</b>                      1b. How are you informed of these procedures? U2</p>	<p><b>Administrator: F1 Frederick</b>                      1b. How were you informed of these procedures? U2</p>
<p>Handed school policy manual and found out accidentally through another teacher regarding portfolio completion</p>	<p>Meeting with assistant principal for instruction</p>
<b>Duties and Expectations/Job Description</b>	
<p><b>Teacher: F1 Fiona</b>                      2. What are the required duties and expectations of your job defined by your job description? P2/A2</p>	<p><b>Administrator: F1 Frederick</b></p>
<p>No job description/contract lists classes to be taught</p>	<p>(Question was asked of theatre arts teachers only)</p>
<b>Evaluation Process Addresses Strengths and Weaknesses</b>	
<p><b>Teacher: F1 Fiona</b>                      3. Describe how your evaluation process addresses strengths and weaknesses for those being evaluated. A9/P5</p>	<p><b>Administrator: F1 Frederick</b>                      3. Describe how your evaluation process addresses strengths and weaknesses for those being evaluated. A9/P5</p>

<p>“P” for proficient; addressed in evaluator’s comments</p>	<p>Addressed in the evaluator’s comments</p>
<p><b>Follows Legal Guidelines</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: F1 Fiona</b></p>	<p><b>Administrator: F1 Frederick</b>          4. How do you ensure that evaluation data of theatre arts teachers follows legal guidelines and is conducted in a confidential manner? P3</p>
<p>(Question was asked of administrators only)</p>	<p>Follows school district policy</p>
<p><b>Performance Reviews Conducted Professionally/Constructively</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: F1 Fiona</b></p>	<p><b>Administrator: F1 Frederick</b>          4a. What processes are in place to ensure that performance reviews are conducted in a professional and constructive manner? P3</p>
<p>(Question was asked of administrators only)</p>	<p>County policy; share with teachers in advance</p>
<p><b>Results of Employee Appraisals are Communicated</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: F1 Fiona</b>          5. Describe the manner in which the results of employee appraisals are communicated. (formal conference, report in your mailbox, etc.) P4/A3</p>	<p><b>Administrator: F1 Frederick</b>          5. Describe the manner in which the results of employee appraisals are communicated. (formal conference, report in your mailbox, etc.) P4/A3</p>
<p>Formal conference for first three years; After third year, summative evaluation form is placed in mailbox, teacher need not sign it</p>	<p>Formal conference first three years; Summative evaluation sheet left in teacher’s box after first three years, teacher need not sign it</p>
<p><b>Evaluation Process Differentiates Teacher Levels</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: F1 Fiona</b></p>	<p><b>Administrator: F1 Frederick</b>          6. How does the evaluation process differentiate among teacher levels of performance and experiences? P5/P7</p>
<p>(Question was asked of administrators only)</p>	<p>Process does not differentiate/administrator’s use of the tool is determining factor</p>
<p><b>Look fors and Red Flags</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: F1 Fiona</b></p>	<p><b>Administrator: F1 Frederick</b>          6a. Describe your “look-fors” and “red flags” in the teacher evaluation process.</p>
<p>(Question was asked of administrators only)</p>	<p>Look fors: students engaged; relevance; knowledge of subject matter, closure; differentiation of instruction</p> <p>Red flags: poor classroom management; lack of content knowledge</p>

<b>Impact of Evaluation</b>	
<b>Teacher: F1 Fiona</b>	<b>Administrator: F1 Frederick</b>
7. What impact does the evaluation have on your teaching? U1	
Fiona is not currently being evaluated by anyone but thinks that evaluation would help her: "If (administrator) didn't understand what you were doing, then I bet my students didn't understand either"	(Question was asked of theatre arts teachers only)
<b>Training to Implement /Understand Evaluation System</b>	
<b>Teacher: F1 Fiona</b>	<b>Administrator: F1 Frederick</b>
9. What training did you receive in order to understand the evaluation system? U3/U5	8. What training did you receive to implement the evaluation system? U3/U5
9a. Describe that training. U3/U5	8a. Describe that training. U3/U5
No training	Division-wide training to learn the different domains of the evaluation system and how to implement
<b>Differentiation Unrelated Job Descriptions</b>	
<b>Teacher: F1 Fiona</b>	<b>Administrator: F1 Frederick</b>
10. How does your evaluation process differentiate between the job performance of teachers with unrelated job descriptions, such as classroom teachers and theatre teachers? U4	10. How does your evaluation process differentiate between the job performance of teachers with unrelated job descriptions, such as classroom teachers and theatre teachers? U4
No differentiation	No differentiation
<b>Links Between Evaluation Data and Staff Development</b>	
<b>Teacher: F1 Fiona</b>	<b>Administrator: F1 Frederick</b>
11. What links exist between evaluation data and planned staff development? U6	11. What links exist between evaluation data and planned staff development? U6
No links in theatre; staff development on putting SOLs on the board as teachers were not following school policy	CIA reports to principal with a list of things that teachers need to improve upon
<b>Evaluation Process Promotes Professional Growth</b>	
<b>Teacher: F1 Fiona</b>	<b>Administrator: F1 Frederick</b>
12. How does the evaluation process promote your professional growth? F1/F2	12. How does the evaluation process promote the professional growth of teachers with varying skills and experience levels? F1/F2
Evaluation process does not promote professional growth	CIA reports help to determine where teachers need professional growth
<b>Evaluation Accurately Assesses Job Performance/Theatre</b>	

<b>Teacher: F1 Fiona</b> 13. To what degree does your current evaluation process accurately assess your job performance? A1/P5	<b>Administrator: F1 Frederick</b> 13. To what degree does your current evaluation process accurately assess the job performance of theatre arts teachers? A1/P5
Not accurate Portfolio serves as a “scrapbook”	Accurate because the administrator determines what things the teachers should improve upon and teacher is then required to make those improvements
<b>Information Generated From Evaluations Shared with Teachers</b>	
<b>Teacher: F1 Fiona</b>	<b>Administrator: F1 Frederick</b>
	14. How is information generated from teacher observations and job performance documented and shared with teachers? A4
(Question was asked of administrators only)	Summative evaluation documentation generated is shared with teachers in formal/informal conferences
<b>Confidentiality of Teacher Performance Reviews</b>	
<b>Teacher: F1 Fiona</b>	<b>Administrator: F1 Frederick</b>
15. What procedures are in place to ensure the confidentiality of teacher performance reviews? A7	15. What procedures are in place to ensure the confidentiality of teacher performance reviews? A7
Summative evaluation documentation is placed in mailboxes (uncertain of security)	Summative evaluations are discussed behind closed doors with all CIA members (teachers/administrators)
<b>Ensuring Objectivity in the Evaluation Process</b>	
<b>Teacher: F1 Fiona</b>	<b>Administrator: F1 Frederick</b>
16. How does the performance evaluation protocol ensure objectivity in the evaluation process? A8	16. How does the performance evaluation protocol ensure objectivity in the evaluation process? A8
It does not/subjective; Content is not something that anyone not trained in theatre would know how to evaluate	It does not/subjective

*The Evaluation Process used by the School District.* The evaluation process for Fiona was a mystery at the beginning of her tenure in her current position and she was hesitant to take part in the study because, as she stated, she had not been recently evaluated, “The evaluation process, if we are discussing this year--my personal

evaluation process has been absolutely nothing.” However, Fiona’s lead teacher, in charge of her evaluations, had a completely different response:

I go in at the beginning of the year and I look and I evaluate the classroom management style. And then I offer them support and then I evaluate them again. And then I’ll evaluate it again within the next two weeks. And not only classroom management but fluidity in teaching—and the flow of ideas. I evaluate that and again I expect different things from a novice teacher than I expect from a teacher who has taught the material before. So far this year I have seen all of my teachers at least eight times.

This disconnect revealed itself throughout the interviews with Fiona and Frederick. Their relationship was clearly the most disconnected of the pairs that the researcher interviewed. The evaluation process for Fiona and Frederick included teacher observation and a portfolio review. Fiona described the process for herself:

We are each assigned an administrator who comes in only really only two or three times a year to basically just walk-through or sit in on your class, fill out a lovely assessment form that they have and put it in your box. This year, since it’s my fifth year, I am not on formal evaluation. Every three years we are formally evaluated and I’m not in a formal evaluation year—so I think that’s why I have not even been evaluated at all this year.

Fiona also described a portfolio process as being part of evaluation process. Although teacher portfolios should reflect a teacher’s performance or talents, a portfolio with a heavy emphasis on amount of materials and documents without discrimination as to what is included has what Tucker, Stronge and Gareis (2002) call a “steamer trunk”

effect (p. 3). Additionally, Stronge and Tucker (2003) conclude that if a portfolio becomes merely a paper chase, it invariably misses the mark of professional growth and improved performance evaluations. Fiona's description of the portfolio process reflected the literature when she described her portfolio this way:

When I put it together it felt like busy work. It's basically just a place to hold things, because you break the portfolio up into these four domains and domain one is me knowing my content and me knowing my students. And what is behind there is my degree because how else do I prove that I know my content? I don't really know other than putting that there. It's just like a scrapbook.

*Policies and Procedures.* Though there was an apparent breakdown in the communication between Fiona and Frederick, they did have parallel responses as to how many of the administrative tasks were handled. For example, they provided similar responses how teacher observation forms were used. Each described the process to addresses strengths and weaknesses for those being evaluated as being found in the context of the remarks made by the administrator using the performance evaluation form. As for how the results of employee appraisals were communicated, each described the process as including a formal conference behind closed doors at the conclusion of a teacher being observed in the classroom. In addition, a summative evaluation form was placed in the mailbox of the teacher who had been evaluated. And finally, both concluded that the evaluation process did not differentiate between the job performance of teachers with unrelated job descriptions, such as classroom teachers and theatre teachers.

*Training and Staff Development in Regards to the Evaluation Process.* While Fiona said that she received no training in understanding the evaluation system, Frederick said that he received division-wide training. He described it:

We actually had an in-service on the new evaluation system. And each domain of the new evaluation, the walk-through evaluation system, the informal evaluation, we had an in-service on what the different domains mean and what we should be looking for and the things that we should be aware of...that was division-wide. It was at different locations by content area at the beginning of the school year.

Fiona described links between evaluation data and planned staff development as including a more broadly defined objective to incorporate all of the staff, regardless of discipline. She described her experiences, “They see areas that are weak and so then occasionally we will have a planned staff development meeting that focuses on writing objectives—that’s one that we had—because you are supposed to have your objectives on the board at all times.” But she also described staff development in theatre by saying, “there is nothing.”

In order to plan staff development using evaluation data, Frederick described a process whereby administrators made unannounced visits in order to find out where teachers needed help. He said, “We actually take the data from the walk-through reports and what we have is we have a team of evaluators and they are known as the CIA.” Frederick described the process of evaluating teachers without beforehand knowledge of a visit from an administrator:

We actually take the data from the walk-through reports and what we have is we have a team of evaluators and they are known as the CIA. And the CIA meets

with the assistant principal for instruction—she is in charge of the CIA. And what she does is she will call us together by...and it's not scheduled, we don't know when we are going to be called. She'll call our classrooms and if we are not there, she'll call out security to come and get us. And we meet in a central location. And then she'll say: here are your evaluation forms. Today we're looking for engaging hooks....we're a secret society. And they won't tell us beforehand because they don't want us to go around to the teachers and say—you're being evaluated! Teach today!

The statement from Frederick reflects the literature base regarding top-down communication. Danielson and McGreal (2000) described evaluation systems as characterized by top-down communication, in which the only evidence of teacher performance is that collected by an administrator during classroom observation which can lead to one sided communication as well as a subordinate relationship during the process.

*Impact, Professional Growth, and Ensuring Objectivity in the Evaluation Process.*

There appeared to be a breakdown in communication between Fiona and Frederick and many of the responses that entailed the evaluation process and how it pertained specifically to Fiona's position as theatre arts teacher. When asked what impact the evaluation process had on her teaching, Fiona responded to by stating:

If they were to evaluate me, I think it would have impact on me. I would love feedback on my teaching. I think that's the only way we grow is for somebody to tell you that they love what you are doing so that you do that more often or say, what were you doing here, I didn't understand and you go, ooh, I bet my students



didn't understand either. You know. I would love to have the feedback. And I've even told my lead that. That I don't get observed all that often—I would love it—please—feel free!

When asked to explain the degree to which the current evaluation process accurately assessed the job performance of theatre arts teachers, Frederick explained:

Our current evaluation system accurately assesses it because the things that we look for in the classroom are things that should occur in classrooms across the board no matter what—there has to be engagement, the teacher has to hook them, the teacher has to have the knowledge of the content, the teacher has to check for understanding, the teacher has to use some sort of technology, in theatre arts, sometimes...maybe it's the manipulation of props...

The statement above is reflected in the literature regarding problems of evaluation. Tucker (1997) described “the crux of the problem” of teacher performance evaluation as being principal's inflated self-ratings of their understanding of teacher evaluation (p. 104). Regardless of the assessments of outside observers and evaluation experts about the factors that enable or disable effective evaluation, the beliefs and attitudes of principals themselves about these factors as well as their beliefs about their own skills and abilities are likely to impact substantially the effective implementation of evaluation policies (Painter, 2000).

Frederick responds that “a teacher has to have knowledge of the content” but Fiona remarked:

I have a new lead teacher this year who has never stepped foot in my room. The lead teacher before, she was more aware of what I actually taught than this guy is.

I think she would be able to step into my room and know what content I was supposed to be teaching. But if I messed up my facts about Greek and Roman theatre, they wouldn't have a clue. They would have no idea.

Finally, when asked about the objectivity of the evaluation process, both Fiona and Frederick agreed that the process was not objective and showed bias. However, they disagreed about whether or not subjectivity in the process of evaluation was positive or negative especially in regards to theatre. Fiona stated:

It's very subjective, I would say because going back to domain one—do I know my content...then there's one that just says "managing student behavior" well, I'm sure to the naked eye, or to anyone walking in to my classroom, half the time it's going to look chaos—but it's very controlled chaos, maybe it's improvisation, maybe we're doing a warm-up and it's going to look like chaos but it's not.

And Frederick responded, "That is a good question...because what one person considers engagement another person might not consider engagement...so I'm not sure whether the form...allows for total objectivity."

*Case Seven: Gabrielle and Gina*

Gabrielle and Gina had worked together for many years as teachers in a large urban school district. The high school where they worked together was one of the largest in its district and had been opened since the mid-1960s. Gabrielle had served as the theatre teacher for this large urban high school for nearly thirty years. She had seen many changes in her school district over those years. Gina was also the department chair of the fine arts and had recently begun the process of teacher evaluation observation. The researcher chose this team to interview because this was a new process for the district and

was in its implementation stages. Gina believed that department heads were charged with the responsibility of performance evaluation all along. It appeared that a former administration did not agree. Gina describes the events:

When they talked to the department chairs about this, said that we should have been doing it all along. But now here's the catch...because the principal that we had before--when I looked in the teacher handbook and it said that we were supposed to do evaluations of our department and when I brought that up to her I was told: 'Oh, no! That is not the department chair's job that is our job'. So it was kind of a territorial issue or it seemed to be. So now we have a new principal and new assistant principals and so like I said they just started this process this year...this year it's more like it's a piece of paper and it's showing that yes, we as department chairs did go in and see each one of our teachers and this is what we saw.

The following table represents the condensed responses, listed by question order with the theatre arts teacher's responses listed on the left as Gabrielle. Following the table is a discussion based on the findings.

Table 18: Case Seven—Gabrielle and Gina  
 Overview of Theatre Teacher/Administrator Condensed Responses Arranged by  
 Interview Question

<b>Evaluation Process</b>	
<b>Teacher: G1 Gabrielle</b>	<b>Administrator: G2 Gina</b>
1. Describe the evaluation process from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.	1. Describe the evaluation process from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.
Teacher observation by administrator every three years after tenure	Teacher observation by lead teacher/department chair once a teacher is tenured—new program
<b>Evaluation Instruments/Tools</b>	
<b>Teacher: G1 Gabrielle</b>	<b>Administrator: G2 Gina</b>
1a. Describe the tools or instruments included in the procedures.	1a. Describe the tools or instruments included in the procedures.
Teacher observation form	Teacher observation form
<b>Informed of Evaluation Procedures</b>	
<b>Teacher: G1 Gabrielle</b>	<b>Administrator: G2 Gina</b>
1b. How are you informed of these procedures? U2	1b. How were you informed of these procedures? U2
Gabrielle asks her department chair if the school year is an evaluation year	Informed of evaluation procedures and expectations at department chair meetings
<b>Duties and Expectations/Job Description</b>	
<b>Teacher: G1 Gabrielle</b>	<b>Administrator: G2 Gina</b>
2. What are the required duties and expectations of your job defined by your job description? P2/A2	
Job description in contract states that teachers will use a approved curriculum which can be found in a written curriculum Separate contract for extra-curricular activities	(Question was asked of theatre arts teachers only)
<b>Evaluation Process Addresses Strengths and Weaknesses</b>	
<b>Teacher: G1 Gabrielle</b>	<b>Administrator: G2 Gina</b>
3. Describe how your evaluation process addresses strengths and weaknesses for those being evaluated. A9/P5	3. Describe how your evaluation process addresses strengths and weaknesses for those being evaluated. A9/P5
Rating scale of 0-4; administrators much comment in writing if they give a teacher a 4 or a 0	Not addressed in summative evaluation form Addressed in the evaluator's comments
<b>Follows Legal Guidelines</b>	

<b>Teacher: G1 Gabrielle</b>	<b>Administrator: G2 Gina</b> 4. How do you ensure that evaluation data of theatre arts teachers follows legal guidelines and is conducted in a confidential manner? P3
(Question was asked of administrators only)	All completed teacher observation forms are returned to administrators (assumption is that they follow legal guidelines)
<b>Performance Reviews Conducted Professionally/Constructively</b>	
<b>Teacher: G1 Gabrielle</b>	<b>Administrator: G2 Gina</b> 4a. What processes are in place to ensure that performance reviews are conducted in a professional and constructive manner? P3
(Question was asked of administrators only)	Teacher observation forms and policy surrounding forms does not state how they should be used to meet this criteria
<b>Results of Employee Appraisals are Communicated</b>	
<b>Teacher: G1 Gabrielle</b> 5. Describe the manner in which the results of employee appraisals are communicated. (formal conference, report in your mailbox, etc.) P4/A3	<b>Administrator: G2 Gina</b> 5. Describe the manner in which the results of employee appraisals are communicated. (formal conference, report in your mailbox, etc.) P4/A3
Formal conference; summative evaluation reports are signed	Department chair drops off teacher observation forms; administrator then follows up in formal conference; summative evaluation reports are signed by teacher
<b>Evaluation Process Differentiates Teacher Levels</b>	
<b>Teacher: G1 Gabrielle</b>	<b>Administrator: G2 Gina</b> 6. How does the evaluation process differentiate among teacher levels of performance and experiences? P5/P7
(Question was asked of administrators only)	Process does not differentiate
<b>Look fors and Red Flags</b>	
<b>Teacher: G1 Gabrielle</b>	<b>Administrator: G2 Gina</b> 6a. Describe your "look-fors" and "red flags" in the teacher evaluation process.
(Question was asked of administrators only)	Look fors: instructions are clear for students; time on task; good rapport; classroom environment  Red flags: chaos; mistreatment of students
<b>Impact of Evaluation</b>	

<p><b>Teacher: G1 Gabrielle</b> 7. What impact does the evaluation have on your teaching? U1</p>	<p><b>Administrator: G2 Gina</b></p>
<p>Feel good if evaluation is positive; Can damage psyche</p>	<p>(Question was asked of theatre arts teachers only)</p>
<p><b>Training to Implement /Understand Evaluation System</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: G1 Gabrielle</b> 9. What training did you receive in order to understand the evaluation system? U3/U5 9a. Describe that training. U3/U5</p>	<p><b>Administrator: G2 Gina</b> 8. What training did you receive to implement the evaluation system? U3/U5 8a. Describe that training. U3/U5</p>
<p>Workshops and faculty meetings followed by open invitations to discuss evaluation with administration</p>	<p>No training</p>
<p><b>Differentiation Unrelated Job Descriptions</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: G1 Gabrielle</b> 10. How does your evaluation process differentiate between the job performance of teachers with unrelated job descriptions, such as classroom teachers and theatre teachers? U4</p>	<p><b>Administrator: G2 Gina</b> 10. How does your evaluation process differentiate between the job performance of teachers with unrelated job descriptions, such as classroom teachers and theatre teachers? U4</p>
<p>No differentiation</p>	<p>No differentiation</p>
<p><b>Links Between Evaluation Data and Staff Development</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: G1 Gabrielle</b> 11. What links exist between evaluation data and planned staff development? U6</p>	<p><b>Administrator: G2 Gina</b> 11. What links exist between evaluation data and planned staff development? U6</p>
<p>No links; based on test results</p>	<p>No links; classroom management staff development ten years prior</p>
<p><b>Evaluation Process Promotes Professional Growth</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: G1 Gabrielle</b> 12. How does the evaluation process promote your professional growth? F1/F2</p>	<p><b>Administrator: G2 Gina</b> 12. How does the evaluation process promote the professional growth of teachers with varying skills and experience levels? F1/F2</p>
<p>Process forces Gabrielle to focus on those things that are marked as needing improvement</p>	<p>Evaluation process brings focus on those things that teachers tend to forget; "lose sight of the basics"</p>
<p><b>Evaluation Accurately Assesses Job Performance/Theatre</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: G1 Gabrielle</b> 13. To what degree does your current evaluation process accurately assess your job performance? A1/P5</p>	<p><b>Administrator: G2 Gina</b> 13. To what degree does your current evaluation process accurately assess the job performance of theatre arts teachers? A1/P5</p>

Not accurate for theatre The teacher evaluation form is general; parts of it are applicable	The teacher evaluation form is general; parts of it are applicable for the fine arts
<b>Information Generated From Evaluations Shared with Teachers</b>	
<b>Teacher: G1 Gabrielle</b>	<b>Administrator: G2 Gina</b>
	14. How is information generated from teacher observations and job performance documented and shared with teachers? A4
(Question was asked of administrators only)	Teacher observation forms generates information to be shared with teachers in formal/informal conferences; Department heads were told that they should have been evaluating teachers all along; former principal said that it was not their responsibility
<b>Confidentiality of Teacher Performance Reviews</b>	
<b>Teacher: G1 Gabrielle</b>	<b>Administrator: G2 Gina</b>
15. What procedures are in place to ensure the confidentiality of teacher performance reviews? A7	15. What procedures are in place to ensure the confidentiality of teacher performance reviews? A7
Conferences are behind closed doors; summative evaluation reports have cover sheets when placed in teacher mailboxes	Evaluations are discussed behind closed doors with administrators; no conference with department heads/teacher observation forms are delivered to assistant principals/principals All files are handled by administrators and school personnel at the central office
<b>Ensuring Objectivity in the Evaluation Process</b>	
<b>Teacher: G1 Gabrielle</b>	<b>Administrator: G2 Gina</b>
16. How does the performance evaluation protocol ensure objectivity in the evaluation process? A8	16. How does the performance evaluation protocol ensure objectivity in the evaluation process? A8
It does not/subjective	It is objective because each category is rated numerically and teachers can dispute rating

This district was just beginning to implement a program for evaluation that included department heads who conducted observations to supplement the evaluation process. Department heads serving as supplemental evaluators seems to be the case for other schools in other districts; this program yielded insight into that phenomenon.

*The Evaluation Process used by the School District.* As a department chair, Gina had insight into the evaluation process and both Gabrielle and Gina agreed on many aspects of the process. They described evaluation process as one in which teacher observation was used until tenure took place. Gabrielle described this process briefly, “We’re evaluated formally every three years, and so during each year we are supposed to accumulate professional evidence and then we put together a notebook of that evidence. During the third year, the assistant principal does at least one classroom visit and then we turn in the book and they review it and they evaluate us.” Gina described the process much the same way.

The tools included in the process were described similarly by both as being a teacher observation form used by the administrator to record what he/she saw in the observation that included a “checklist” of items. Gabrielle presented a copy of the form during the interview and described it:

I’m supposed to have evidence that shows my planning assessment and achievement, instructional leadership, content knowledge and that kind of thing, safety and organizational management, professionalism and communication and community relations. This is what the assistant principal uses to evaluate—I know that this is the evidence that I am supposed to present and I know that these are the things in which I am being judged.

*Policies and Procedures.* In describing the procedures used in the evaluation process, both Gabrielle and Gina had some concerns about their own process, In describing how the process addressed strengths and weaknesses for those being evaluated, Gabrielle responded:



The evaluative instrument has four levels and the...if you get a four, then that means that you are consistently high in that area—from the rating scale... Well when this first came out, we were aware that the assistant principals were being told to give two's and three's...it fired a lot of us up because we were told, two's are good, two's mean that you are doing well. And all of us are going--No, two says that we are doing average. Nobody is that stupid (laughs). And this came into place when there was an awful lot of talk about merit pay. So it was more threatening than it is now. And I believe that in some schools, and it was the case here for a while, that this was used as a power tool.

Gabrielle and Gina had similar responses to those questions regarding school policy and the handling of administrative tasks related to the evaluation process. Both Gabrielle and Gina said that all evaluations are held behind closed doors, with teachers signing off on completed summative evaluations and receiving copies for their records. In terms of the evaluation process differentiating between the job performance of teachers with unrelated job descriptions, such as classroom teachers and theatre teachers, both concluded that there was no differentiation and that the evaluation process remained the same regardless of subject matter.

*Training and Staff Development in Regards to the Evaluation Process.* The evaluation process was a new part of Gina's job description; however, she did not receive any training to implement the new evaluation system. Instead, she commented, "We were given the form and that was it." She also remarked:

We don't conference with the teacher. We fill out the form and we turn it in to the AP. And I guess they conference with the teacher if they feel that they need

to. And like I said, it is the first year so I'm not sure maybe it was just because it was the first year they've had us do this that they wanted us to get used to doing this and next year, things may be a little bit different.

Gina was uncertain as to what her tasks should include in the evaluation process and she was uncertain as to what role she played in the evaluation process.

*Impact, Professional Growth and Ensuring Objectivity in the Evaluation Process.*

Regarding the impact of the evaluation process on theatre arts teachers, Gabrielle and Gina agreed that it was ineffective. Gina responded to the accuracy of the evaluation process in terms of the job performance of theatre arts teachers by saying, "Some of the areas don't really concern us as fine arts teachers so then you wonder how is the assistant principal evaluating you in that because they have to put a score in..." Gabrielle described an experience where she received a low set of evaluation scores on her teacher observation form. She said of the experience:

Well...I was getting three's and two's. I did a lot of soul-searching and talked to a couple of colleagues and...I felt...scolded. I do take teaching seriously and they were saying that I was mediocre and...and that's one of those personal demons that I have; remember Salieri? Salieri said that God had granted him the demon of mediocrity. And that's one of those things that has always sat on my shoulder. The idea that I could have a student who walked out not having (the best possible experience)...I'm not capable of brilliance, but they should get as much as I am capable of...I really felt that it was saying that I wasn't good enough, and yet I know what I was doing and...so there was an anger and frustration. And I'm sure

that I externalized that some...you know, if what I'm doing isn't good enough, then what is there to do?

Gina and Gabrielle both agreed that the performance evaluation protocol did not ensure objectivity in the evaluation process. Both concluded that the relationship between an administrator and those being evaluated could be influential in the outcome of an evaluation. Gina said, "It can be subjective based on how the person evaluating sees it..." And Gabrielle was passionate in her response:

I don't think it does. That and when they talked about this being a basis for merit pay there was a lot of talk about what about the influence of the building principal or the assistant principal...and I was very aware that my principal was why I was not being seen as an effective teacher. She didn't like me, she didn't like my program, she had someone under her wing who hated me--was a person in our department and he wanted control of the theatre and so he did everything he could to malign me and to convince her to get me out of that space and out of control of that space and it was common knowledge that she saw me as a pariah in this building. But people would, just random people, would see me in the hall and say, I am so sorry. So it was awful. But it is a clear example of what inequity can exist in the evaluation system. And had this gone to merit pay I definitely would have suffered.

At the conclusion of the interviews, the researcher asked each participant if they were interested in adding any comments or if they would like to ask any questions. Gina responded that she was disappointed that the new evaluation process did not aid the fine

arts. In addition, she felt as if it was just “one more thing” that they were asked to do that had not been implemented properly by the school district or by the principal.

Gabrielle promptly answered “yes” and then sat in silence for several minutes.

Finally, she spoke slowly and deliberately, much like a perspicacious prophet:

This notion of evaluation is fine. But I think there should be an additional piece that should apply to the subject area. It’s sort of like judging that one act play—the apples and oranges thing. And so I think how a foreign language teacher runs a classroom has to be different than how even an English teacher runs a classroom even though they are kind of related—they are really not. There is, I just really think that there should be something...and as the assistant principals get to know their subject areas--the ones that they supervise--I think that we have a good team and that they do try to do something like that but there is no way to express it unless they are really willing to sit and write. We talk about best practices--why isn’t there a best practices in a foreign language classroom and a checklist? Oh, that is a best practice, I see that in her.

After nearly thirty years of teaching and experiencing the evaluation process, Gabrielle was disappointed that little had changed; her department chair, Gina, who had spent nearly as many years in the same department working with Gabrielle felt much the same way and concluded, “Well, I’ve been here forever so I’ve had it forever (laughs). But they don’t always work well, you know, in the fine arts. But we do the best we can to make it work for us.”

*Case Eight: Hannah and Heather*

Of the eight pairs interviewed, Hannah and Heather, like Clay and Catherine, worked in a specialty center for the visual and performing arts, i.e., a performing arts public high school. However, Hannah and Heather's performing arts school was in a suburban school setting. It was also located in a different school district. Like Clay, Heather taught with other theatre teachers. Hannah worked with two additional theatre arts teachers whereas Clay worked with only one other theatre arts teacher. And Heather, like Catherine, had originally been a teacher of music. Unlike Clay, Heather was evaluated by two administrators who split their responsibilities of evaluation equally. For this case, the researcher interviewed Heather, who served in much the same capacity as Catherine. Catherine served as Director of the center, whereas Heather's title was that of Coordinator. Both had similar responsibilities for their respective schools. A discussion of the case of Hannah and Heather follows the comparison table of condensed responses, listed by question order with the theatre arts teacher's responses listed on the left as Hannah. Along with the discussion, emergent patterns are disclosed as well.

Table 19: Case Eight—Hannah and Heather  
 Overview of Theatre Teacher/Administrator Condensed Responses Arranged by  
 Interview Questions

<b>Evaluation Process</b>	
<b>Teacher: H1 Heather</b>	<b>Administrator: H2 Hannah</b>
1. Describe the evaluation process from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.	1. Describe the evaluation process from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.
Teacher observation by administrator two times a year; administrator completes a written formative evaluation	Teacher observation by administrator two to three times a year
<b>Evaluation Instruments/Tools</b>	
<b>Teacher: H1 Heather</b>	<b>Administrator: H2 Hannah</b>
1a. Describe the tools or instruments included in the procedures.	1a. Describe the tools or instruments included in the procedures.
Teacher observation form/"check list" with scripting	Teacher observation form/scripting/"check list"
<b>Informed of Evaluation Procedures</b>	
<b>Teacher: H1 Heather</b>	<b>Administrator: H2 Hannah</b>
1b. How are you informed of these procedures? U2	1b. How were you informed of these procedures? U2
New teacher meetings	Informed through assistant principal in charge of instruction; were told that observation/evaluation was not part of job description but then attended workshops/training to learn procedures
<b>Duties and Expectations/Job Description</b>	
<b>Teacher: H1 Heather</b>	<b>Administrator: H2 Hannah</b>
2. What are the required duties and expectations of your job defined by your job description? P2/A2	
No job description Contract provides coaching information	(Question was asked of theatre arts teachers only)
<b>Evaluation Process Addresses Strengths and Weaknesses</b>	
<b>Teacher: H1 Heather</b>	<b>Administrator: H2 Hannah</b>
3. Describe how your evaluation process addresses strengths and weaknesses for those being evaluated. A9/P5	3. Describe how your evaluation process addresses strengths and weaknesses for those being evaluated. A9/P5
Teacher observation form uses a set of observed characteristics to check off; additional comments written in margins	Teacher observation form uses a set of observed characteristics to check off; issues can be addressed in the evaluator's comments; scripting
<b>Follows Legal Guidelines</b>	

<b>Teacher: H1 Heather</b>	<b>Administrator: H2 Hannah</b> 4. How do you ensure that evaluation data of theatre arts teachers follows legal guidelines and is conducted in a confidential manner? P3
(Question was asked of administrators only)	Currently it is not following district guidelines; conferences are held behind closed doors for confidentiality
<b>Performance Reviews Conducted Professionally/Constructively</b>	
<b>Teacher: H1 Heather</b>	<b>Administrator: H2 Hannah</b> 4a. What processes are in place to ensure that performance reviews are conducted in a professional and constructive manner? P3
(Question was asked of administrators only)	County policy; share with teachers in advance
<b>Results of Employee Appraisals are Communicated</b>	
<b>Teacher: H1 Heather</b> 5. Describe the manner in which the results of employee appraisals are communicated. (formal conference, report in your mailbox, etc.) P4/A3	<b>Administrator: H2 Hannah</b> 5. Describe the manner in which the results of employee appraisals are communicated. (formal conference, report in your mailbox, etc.) P4/A3
Formal conference, summative evaluation reports are signed at conference	Formal conference, summative evaluation report is signed at conference
<b>Evaluation Process Differentiates Teacher Levels</b>	
<b>Teacher: H1 Heather</b>	<b>Administrator: H2 Hannah</b> 6. How does the evaluation process differentiate among teacher levels of performance and experiences? P5/P7
(Question was asked of administrators only)	Process does not differentiate/administrator's use of the tool is determining factor
<b>Look fors and Red Flags</b>	
<b>Teacher: H1 Heather</b>	<b>Administrator: H2 Hannah</b> 6a. Describe your "look-fors" and "red flags" in the teacher evaluation process.
(Question was asked of administrators only)	Look fors: proper techniques in the arts are being taught; clarity of teacher goals  Red flags: discipline
<b>Impact of Evaluation</b>	
<b>Teacher: H1 Heather</b> 7. What impact does the evaluation have on your teaching? U1	<b>Administrator: H2 Hannah</b>
Self-esteem boost	(Question was asked of theatre arts teachers only)

<b>Training to Implement /Understand Evaluation System</b>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Teacher: H1 Heather</b></p> <p>9. What training did you receive in order to understand the evaluation system? U3/U5 9a. Describe that training. U3/U5</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Administrator: H2 Hannah</b></p> <p>8. What training did you receive to implement the evaluation system? U3/U5 8a. Describe that training. U3/U5</p>
Minimal; during new teacher training	County-wide training that described the process and written information distributed
<b>Differentiation Unrelated Job Descriptions</b>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Teacher: H1 Heather</b></p> <p>10. How does your evaluation process differentiate between the job performance of teachers with unrelated job descriptions, such as classroom teachers and theatre teachers? U4</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Administrator: H2 Hannah</b></p> <p>10. How does your evaluation process differentiate between the job performance of teachers with unrelated job descriptions, such as classroom teachers and theatre teachers? U4</p>
No differentiation	No differentiation
<b>Links Between Evaluation Data and Staff Development</b>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Teacher: H1 Heather</b></p> <p>11. What links exist between evaluation data and planned staff development? U6</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Administrator: H2 Hannah</b></p> <p>11. What links exist between evaluation data and planned staff development? U6</p>
No links	No links; Hannah described this as a “huge weakness in this county”
<b>Evaluation Process Promotes Professional Growth</b>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Teacher: H1 Heather</b></p> <p>12. How does the evaluation process promote your professional growth? F1/F2</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Administrator: H2 Hannah</b></p> <p>12. How does the evaluation process promote the professional growth of teachers with varying skills and experience levels? F1/F2</p>
Allows the opportunity for reflection as a way to promote professional growth	Scripting and recommendations provide the opportunity for reflection as a way to promote professional growth
<b>Evaluation Accurately Assesses Job Performance/Theatre</b>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Teacher: H1 Heather</b></p> <p>13. To what degree does your current evaluation process accurately assess your job performance? A1/P5</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Administrator: H2 Hannah</b></p> <p>13. To what degree does your current evaluation process accurately assess the job performance of theatre arts teachers? A1/P5</p>
Informal feedback and recognition by administrators provides accuracy in assessing job performance	Administrators comment on summative evaluation reports as a way to provide accuracy in assessing job performance
<b>Information Generated From Evaluations Shared with Teachers</b>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Teacher: H1 Heather</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Administrator: H2 Hannah</b></p> <p>14. How is information generated from teacher observations and job performance documented and shared with teachers? A4</p>



(Question was asked of administrators only)	Completed teacher observation forms shared with teachers in formal/informal conferences
<b>Confidentiality of Teacher Performance Reviews</b>	
<b>Teacher: H1 Heather</b>	<b>Administrator: H2 Hannah</b>
15. What procedures are in place to ensure the confidentiality of teacher performance reviews? A7	15. What procedures are in place to ensure the confidentiality of teacher performance reviews? A7
Conferences are private	Summative evaluation report forms are handled by administrators and school personnel at the central office
<b>Ensuring Objectivity in the Evaluation Process</b>	
<b>Teacher: H1 Heather</b>	<b>Administrator: H2 Hannah</b>
16. How does the performance evaluation protocol ensure objectivity in the evaluation process? A8	16. How does the performance evaluation protocol ensure objectivity in the evaluation process? A8
It can be subjective	It does not/subjective

Heather had previously worked in a public high school as a theatre arts teacher, but had been with the current school of the arts for five years. Hannah had been with the school for thirteen years and had been in charge of the process of evaluation for teachers for six years. How interactions with evaluatees/evaluators are handled played an important role in this school; Hannah remarked:

We use the phrase ‘HS family’—the administrators apparently feel like we are family and say so frequently...in other schools I’ve heard people comment on you know, and then he came in to observe my class and he did this and this and then he aaahhh! As if the whole I’m being observed (there) is a feeling like, I’m a teacher and I’m going to be beaten by the principal. Here...it’s very comfortable...obviously if we were doing things wrong...they would have suggestions...but it’s not a stressful process.

*The Evaluation Process used by the School District.* Hannah and Heather described the evaluation process much the same way, an observation process with a post-

conference, no pre-conference; however, Heather added that new teachers receive additional training and are all evaluated by the same administrator, until tenure. After tenure, the new teachers report to new administrators for the evaluation process based on their discipline. The evaluation tools used in the process included a “brief check list” as Hannah described it. She added that she scripted written narrative in the column to add information.

*Policies and Procedures.* Within the documentation, strengths and weaknesses were addressed by additional narrative or scripting within the teacher observation form and both Hannah and Heather described the same series of events for how employee results are handled. Both Heather and Hannah also responded similarly to questions regarding the process of the evaluation in terms of procedures. Each described the process as including formal conferences behind closed doors where teachers were asked to sign summative evaluation reports and observations were discussed.

Heather said of the employee results, “At the formal conference we go over it (the summative evaluation) and I receive a copy of it. She makes a photocopy of it to give to me.” Hannah described a similar process. She said:

The person who is being observed, you must have a post- or a sit down...and they do have the option to write down their comments, their recommendations...on the form and then it’s signed by everyone, so it’s part of the document.

*Training and Staff Development in Regards to the Evaluation Process.* Both Heather and Hannah described the links between evaluation data and staff development as being problematic. Heather described it as the district’s “sore spot” and Hannah said, “It’s a weakness in this county...and it’s huge.”

Heather said that there was perhaps new teacher training to understand the evaluation process but that she could not recall any specifics. Hannah said that she was specifically told that evaluating the fine arts department was not part of her job description. She explains:

When I did go to department chair training, which was my option to do last year-- there were teachers from across the county and various schools who were department chairs and we did talk more in depth about how to observe a teacher and make them feel at ease and how to address difficult situations and such...but until then, nothing. The lady who presented it was the one who told us really you are not supposed to be doing this...there was quite a bit of talk about the frustrations about the fact that we're not supposed to be doing these evaluations... that's what we were told at our county-wide department chairs training—that's what we were told...that we were really not supposed to be doing this. But there's no way that all of those principals could get to all the teachers—there's no way.

*Impact, Professional Growth and Ensuring Objectivity in the Evaluation Process.*

Hannah and Heather both described the evaluation process as not differentiated for unrelated job descriptions or various disciplines. However, despite the drawbacks of the evaluation process, Heather described it as having a positive effect on her self-esteem and said, "...because neither of the people that evaluate me have ever taught the subject that I teach—their reaction to things, their positive reaction to things that I consider commonplace does help to reaffirm that what I am doing is valuable..."

Both administrator and teacher were asked: how does the evaluation process promote the professional growth of teachers with varying skills and experience levels? Both Hannah and Heather agreed it was the opportunity to provide and read narrative comments/scripting that promoted professional growth. Heather responded:

I would say through the reflection during the post-observation conference.

Through the scripting and the evaluator's (comments)—because of course it is feedback. Any feedback at all, 'I observed you doing this'—well yes, I did do that...and their observation and evaluation did provide me with an opportunity to reflect.

Despite Heather's happiness with her administrators and her happiness with how the evaluation process was handled in her school, she still had qualms regarding the objectivity of the evaluation process. Heather commented:

I don't know that it does...I don't see how an evaluation protocol could exactly...it is merely a list of observed characteristics so in that sense it can't guarantee objectivity...and I would say that something that I don't know about but that could help with that is the instructions that the evaluator is given in how to write the transcript section of it.

Hannah responded much more strongly, "It really doesn't. If you really wanted to nail a teacher for something, for the wrong reason—I mean, you could certainly do it." Even within the best of circumstances, in this case a performing arts school with a congenial and cohesive staff, there still loomed the possibility that the evaluation process could be problematic instead of beneficial based on the circumstances of those using it.

#### *Cross-Case Analysis*

In this section, the researcher conducted a cross-case analysis of all of the responses of the theatre arts teachers and administrators in an attempt to delineate emergent patterns. A second coder (peer reviewer) was used to evaluate the responses and double coding was used as one method to ensure credibility. A peer review or debriefing is the review of the data and research process by someone who is familiar with the research or the phenomenon being explored. A peer reviewer provides support, plays devil's advocate, challenges the researchers' assumptions, pushes the researchers to the next step methodologically, and asks hard questions about methods and interpretations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

A comparison table was completed revealing all of the responses, listed by question order, from all of the theatre arts teachers and administrators (Table 18). Teacher responses are located in the left column. Administrator responses are located on the right. A table representing the major patterns for teachers (Table 19), a table representing the major patterns for administrators (Table 20) and a discussion of the responses follow Table 18, below.

Table 20: Cross-Case Comparison of all Participants: Overview of Theatre Teacher /Administrator Condensed Responses Arranged by Interview Questions

<b>Evaluation Process</b>	
<p><b>Theatre Teachers</b></p> <p>1. Describe the evaluation process from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.</p> <p>Observation by administrator: A1, B1, C1, D1, E1, F1, G1, H1                      Portfolio: B1, F1                      Personal Growth Plan: C1                      Performance Targets: D1</p>	<p><b>Administrators</b></p> <p>1. Describe the evaluation process from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.</p> <p>Observation by administrator: A2, B2, C2, D2, E2, F1, G2, H2                      Portfolio: B2, F2                      Performance Targets: D2</p>
<b>Evaluation Instruments/Tools</b>	
<p><b>Theatre Teachers</b></p> <p>1a. Describe the tools or instruments included in the procedures.</p> <p>Teacher observation form/summative evaluation form: A1, B1, C1, D1, E1, F1, G1, H1                      Portfolio: F1</p>	<p><b>Administrators</b></p> <p>1a. Describe the tools or instruments included in the procedures.</p> <p>Teacher observation form/scripting: A2, B2, C2, D2, E2, F2, G2, H2</p>
<b>Informed of Evaluation Procedures</b>	
<p><b>Theatre Teachers</b></p> <p>1b. How are you informed of these procedures? U2</p> <p>Department head/mentor teacher/administrator/new teacher meetings: A1, D1, H1                      Email communication: B1                      Not informed: C1, E1, F1, G1</p>	<p><b>Administrators</b></p> <p>1b. How were you informed of these procedures? U2</p> <p>Policy determined by principal: A2, B2, C2, D2, E2, H2                      Professional development: E2                      Departmental meetings: G2</p>
<b>Duties and Expectations/Job Description</b>	
<p><b>Theatre Teachers</b></p> <p>2. What are the required duties and expectations of your job defined by your job description? P2/A2</p> <p>No job description: A1, B1, C1, E1, F1                      Extra curricular responsibilities outlined in separate contract: D1, G1, H2                      Curriculum written/contract specific: G1</p>	<p><b>Administrators: A2 Andrea</b></p> <p>(Question was asked of theatre arts teachers only)</p>
<b>Evaluation Process Addresses Strengths and Weaknesses</b>	
<p><b>Theatre Teachers</b></p> <p>3. Describe how your evaluation process addresses strengths and weaknesses for those being evaluated. A9/P5</p>	<p><b>Administrators</b></p> <p>3. Describe how your evaluation process addresses strengths and weaknesses for those being evaluated. A9/P5</p>

Not addressed in the evaluation report: A1, C1 Rating scale in evaluation: B1, E1, G1 Determined by administrator/addressed in evaluator's comments (subjective/scripting): D1, F1, H1	Addressed in the evaluator's comments: A2, B2, C2, D2, E2, F2, G2, H2
<b>Follows Legal Guidelines</b>	
<b>Theatre Teachers</b>	<b>Administrators</b>
	4. How do you ensure that evaluation data of theatre arts teachers follows legal guidelines and is conducted in a confidential manner? P3
(Question was asked of administrators only)	Follows county policy: A2, C2, D2, F2 Documents placed in files: B2 Discretion of administrator: E2, G2 Currently not following district guidelines: H2
<b>Performance Reviews Conducted Professionally/Constructively</b>	
<b>Theatre Teachers</b>	<b>Administrators</b>
	4a. What processes are in place to ensure that performance reviews are conducted in a professional and constructive manner? P3
(Question was asked of administrators only)	County/district policy; share with teachers in advance: A2, B2, E2, F2, G2, H2 Determined individually by administrator: C2, D2
<b>Results of Employee Appraisals are Communicated</b>	
<b>Theatre Teachers</b>	<b>Administrators</b>
5. Describe the manner in which the results of employee appraisals are communicated. (formal conference, report in your mailbox, etc.) P4/A3	5. Describe the manner in which the results of employee appraisals are communicated. (formal conference, report in your mailbox, etc.) P4/A3
Formal conference/forms are signed: A1, B1, D1, E1, F2, G1, H1 Email contact: C1	Formal conference/summative evaluation form distributed: A2, B2, D2, E2, F2, G2, H2 Informal conference: C2
<b>Evaluation Process Differentiates Teacher Levels</b>	
<b>Theatre Teachers</b>	<b>Administrators</b>
	6. How does the evaluation process differentiate among teacher levels of performance and experiences? P5/P7
(Question was asked of administrators only)	Process does not differentiate/administrator's use of the tool is determining factor: A2, B2, C2, D2, E2, F2, G2, H2





<b>Links Between Evaluation Data and Staff Development</b>	
<b>Theatre Teachers</b>	<b>Administrators</b>
11. What links exist between evaluation data and planned staff development? U6	11. What links exist between evaluation data and planned staff development? U6
No links: A1, B1, C1, D1, E1, F1, G1, H1	No links: A2, C2, E2, G2, H2 Data driven by division: B2, D2 CIA reports to principal: F2
<b>Evaluation Process Promotes Professional Growth</b>	
<b>Theatre Teachers</b>	<b>Administrators</b>
12. How does the evaluation process promote your professional growth? F1/F2	12. How does the evaluation process promote the professional growth of teachers with varying skills and experience levels? F1/F2
Does not promote professional growth: A1, D1, E1, F1 Individually pursued projects: B1 Individual reflection: C1, G1, H1	Attempts to promote growth by teacher creating goals: A2, B2 Does not promote professional growth: C2 Determined by administrator: D2, E2, G2, H2 CIA helps to determine professional growth: F2
<b>Evaluation Accurately Assesses Job Performance/Theatre</b>	
<b>Theatre Teachers</b>	<b>Administrators</b>
13. To what degree does your current evaluation process accurately assess your job performance? A1/P5	13. To what degree does your current evaluation process accurately assess the job performance of theatre arts teachers? A1/P5
Not accurate: A1, B1, C1, D1, E1, F1, G1 Portfolio serves as a "scrapbook": F1 Informal feedback provides accuracy: H1	Not accurate: A2, B2, C2, E2, F2, G2 Determined by final theatre performance or a combination of factors: D2, H2
<b>Information Generated From Evaluations Shared with Teachers</b>	
<b>Theatre Teachers</b>	<b>Administrators</b>
(Question was asked of administrators only)	14. How is information generated from teacher observations and job performance documented and shared with teachers? A4
	Summative evaluation report shared in conference: A2, B2, C2, D2, E2, F2, G2, H2
<b>Confidentiality of Teacher Performance Reviews</b>	
<b>Theatre Teachers</b>	<b>Administrators</b>
15. What procedures are in place to ensure the confidentiality of teacher performance reviews? A7	15. What procedures are in place to ensure the confidentiality of teacher performance reviews? A7

Conferences are private: A1, D1, G1, H1 Completed evaluations placed in mailbox: B1, E1, F1, G1 Uncertain: C1	Conferences are private: A2, C2, D2, E2, G2 All files are handled by administrators and school personnel at the central office: A2, B2, C2, D2, E2, G2, H2 Summative evaluations are discussed with CIA members: F2
<b>Ensuring Objectivity in the Evaluation Process</b>	
<b>Theatre Teachers</b>	<b>Administrators</b>
16. How does the performance evaluation protocol ensure objectivity in the evaluation process? A8	16. How does the performance evaluation protocol ensure objectivity in the evaluation process? A8
It does not/subjective: A1, B1, C1, E1, F1, G1, H1 "Objective through the use of many perspectives": D1	It does not/subjective: A2, B2, C2, D2, E2, F2, G2, H2

Table 20 represents the responses of all theatre arts teachers and administrators who took part in the study.

Table 21: Emergent Patterns from Cross-Case Studies: Theatre Arts Teachers

<p><b>Emergent Patterns from Cross-Case Studies:</b></p> <p><b>Theatre Arts Teachers</b></p>	Theatre Arts Teacher A	Theatre Arts Teacher B	Theatre Arts Teacher C	Theatre Arts Teacher D	Theatre Arts Teacher E	Theatre Arts Teacher F	Theatre Arts Teacher G	Theatre Arts Teacher H	Percentage of teachers
<p>Pattern: Observation as most widely used form of teacher performance evaluation</p>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	100%
<p>Pattern: Teacher observation form/summative evaluation form as most widely used tool for teacher performance evaluation</p>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	100%
<p>Pattern: Lack of a job description to tie into teacher performance evaluation</p>	•	•	•		•	•			62.5%
<p>Pattern: Employee appraisals are communicated through formal conferences and behind closed doors</p>	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	87.5%
<p>Pattern: Evaluation impacts self-esteem or psyche as opposed to teaching strategies/results; evaluation has no impact</p>	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	87.5%
<p>Pattern: Received no training to understand the evaluation process/system</p>	•		•		•	•			50%
<p>Pattern: Evaluation process does not differentiate between the job performance of teachers with unrelated job descriptions</p>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	100%
<p>Pattern: No links between evaluation and planned staff development</p>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	100%
<p>Pattern: Evaluation process does not promote professional growth</p>	•			•	•	•			50%
<p>Pattern: Current evaluation process does not accurately assess job performance</p>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		100%

Pattern: Conferences are behind closed doors in teacher performance reviews and completed evaluations are placed in teacher mailbox	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	87.5%
Pattern: The performance evaluation protocol does not ensure objectivity in the evaluation process.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	100%

Table 21 represents the major patterns found in the theatre teacher responses across all eight cases.

*Theatre Teachers Responses*

This section provides a cross-case analysis of all theatre arts teachers’ responses. The theatre arts teachers who participated in this study were all considered master theatre arts teachers. Most of them had a decade or more of experience; most of them held master’s degrees. Several of them held Master of Fine Arts degrees which is a terminal degree in the fine and performing arts. To take part in the study, teachers had to have after-school theatre responsibilities. In addition, the majority of the classes that they taught, or all of their classes, had to be theatre classes. At the conclusion of the study, it was discovered that many of the theatre arts teachers also had professional theatre experience before or during their time spent in the classroom.

*Teacher Responses to Question 1: Describe the evaluation process from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.*

Related to Question 1, all eight of the theatre teachers responded that the process included observation as part of the evaluation process. Alexa commented on the evaluation process regarding teacher observation this way:

...it's a time of, I think, time of tension for the teacher because somehow you think this magical process is going to condemn you or give you a gold star, you know...a star on the walk of fame or something. However, that rarely, rarely, happens. And so it's just evaluation anxiety similar to test anxiety.

Again, the pattern of how interactions with evaluatees/evaluators are handled emerged. Eight of the eight teachers reported that their interactions with administrators made the difference in their evaluation process. Some of the relationships were positive and some were negative, but all relationships with administrators ultimately affected their evaluations in some way. David described the teacher observation part of the evaluation process to be a more positive experience when a new principal began employment at the school where he taught. He explained:

I'm kind of in a unique situation in that art administration is really supportive of our program and actually remembers that there is an arts program in high school. And it's really happened since our current principal has been in, I guess in power, would be the best term for it, which is a stellar difference from the previous principal who was not very personable at all, and who told not only myself but the band instructor who was here for a few years with me—well such and such, whether it be band or theatre or whatever, is a nice little diversion throughout the day, but of course that's all it is. It all depends on who is at the top of the food chain—right now it's wonderful and you know, I hope he's there for another couple of years at least.

*Teacher Response to Question 1a: Describe the tools or instruments included in the (evaluation) procedures.* All eight teachers described a teacher observation

evaluation form created by the district. In one case, one of the administrators in one of the performing arts high school modified the teacher observation form. Other teachers described a portfolio review as being supplemental material for teacher performance evaluation. Two teachers described using a portfolio review as part of their summative evaluation process but only one of them described it as a positive experience. Bard commented:

For me, it opens doors for me because I can choose a project—so I can collaborate with another teacher on a project or I can look at diversity as a project...maybe I'll look at these projects and use that as a way to bring more African-American students into the theatre program. And that's what I make out of my own evaluation.

Eight of the eight teachers described the teacher observation form as having a place where administrators could comment, script or include narrative. Eight of the eight felt that this part of the evaluation form could be the most helpful even though it was completely generated by the administrator's observation. Five of the eight teachers were concerned because they believed the administrators who used the forms did not understand theatre and therefore the comments were not always helpful and those teachers who did believe that the administrator 'understood them' were from performing arts schools or their administrator in charge of evaluation had an arts background. Fiona remarked:

I can't even think of an occasion where an administrator came to me and said this is where I see that you could make improvements or where, this is where you are

really good because theatre really is, we are the red-headed step-children and nobody really speaks to me about what I'm doing.

*Teacher Response to Question 1b: How are you informed of these procedures?*

In most cases, theatre arts teachers were informed of the evaluation procedures through new teacher orientation meetings. Half (four of the eight) teachers were not informed at all. As the teachers had been in their positions over time, many of them would have to take the initiative to find out information regarding any procedural changes by the district or school of to even know if they were up for evaluation that year. Gabrielle, who had been in her teaching position twenty-six years, commented, "I usually, towards the beginning of the year, will ask is this a year that you are evaluating me?"

*Teacher Responses to Question 2: What are the required duties and expectations of your job as defined by your job description?* In six cases, the teachers did not have or could not find a copy of their job description. Alexa stated:

I don't think I've seen a job description. So I went to the school board office employment pages and I went to the policy manual. I have yet to find a job description for any teacher. And here's how it kind of gets around that: the human resources job description for teachers, I don't think exists for any kind of teacher view, or a public view, because they keep a running—they're open to receive applications at all times. Now if you were to go on to a coaching position or an administrative position, you'd find a job description for that. But teachers do not have, that I have found, a job description. Now if there is one, it's not easily accessible.

Three other theatre teachers, like Alexa, found that they had a coaching contract that described their responsibilities beyond the school day for their extra-curricular activities and theatrical performances. The majority of the theatre teachers took on responsibilities of the auditorium that went beyond their teaching or coaching responsibilities. David found that he took on so much responsibility beyond the coaching contract that he received supplemental pay for managing the auditorium. David described the details of his obligations:

As defined by the contract, I am to carry five classes for full time contracture. Then there is the fun part of the drama coach's contract, which technically speaking only requires three things of me: the fall show, the spring musical and also coaching the competition one act. And, as you know, depending what we want to do with our program, we can go way beyond that. Then there is the stuff that's not on the books as well, any time anyone comes in to the auditorium, I'm the one who knows how it works, so they call me. And of course outside groups coming in they need help with sound and lights and things like that. And sometimes, I'll get supplemental pay for this, so it's not like I'm volunteering all of my time, although a lot of times it is volunteering. So I became the building administrator for that weekend instead of say having one of the other administrators from the front office have to be there for that weekend.

*Teacher Responses to Question 3: Describe how your evaluation process addresses strengths and weaknesses for those being evaluated.* Two of the theatre said that strengths and weaknesses were not addressed in the evaluation process. Three of the theatre teachers said that the evaluation process addressed strengths and weaknesses in



terms of a rating scale. And three of theatre teachers said that strengths and weaknesses were addressed through narrative descriptions or scripting on the teacher observation forms used in the evaluation process. Emily echoed the sentiments of the majority of the theatre teachers interviewed in this response:

...there is a comment section where they can write comments but I don't really feel like there is...nothing that I ever see, at least the forms that I see and use, is discipline specific. So other than classroom management, it's hard for them to be specific as to how can I improve outside of that comment section that I have.

*Teacher Responses to Question 5: Describe the manner in which the results of employee appraisals were communicated.* Seven of the eight teachers said that the standard practice was to take part in a post-conference several days to several weeks after the conclusion of a classroom observation. Seven of the eight teachers also described signing a summative evaluation report in that meeting that would become part of their personnel file. Though a formal conference was the gold standard, several teachers commented that time was an element of consideration. Bard commented:

Many times if they are running late and they have to have it in to the school board they'll just have me sign it really quick...but I think a lot of the evaluation deals with the fact of whether or not the faculty member is coming back or not. A lot of times they'll come see you face to face and say, "Hey sign off on this," or they'll put it in your mailbox and say "please return to me"; but if they have a discrepancy, they want to sit down and talk to you about it.

This pattern of lack of time necessary for the evaluation process was consistent in all eight theatre teachers. It appeared in the description of how many of the evaluation

procedures were handled, including the results in which employee appraisals were communicated. The lack of time was only one element that impacted theatre arts teachers in the evaluation process.

*Teacher Responses to Question 7: What impact does the evaluation have on your teaching?* Five of the eight teachers reported that it either boosted their self-esteem or, in the case of a poor evaluation, damaged their psyche. For one teacher, the impact of the evaluation gave him pause to reflect upon his classroom management skills. Clay said:

That's a good question. It helps me with classroom management, but she's a music teacher so when I get heavy into theatre history and things like that, that's stuff that she doesn't understand. So content-wise it's not as useful, it's just the nuts and bolts of teaching that I find useful.

However, Bard and several other teachers were discouraged by their evaluations. Bard commented on the issue:

I think it's a good thing, for a lot of people, but for me--I know that a lot of the weaknesses that they put down for me I'm going to get. They are going to put down "professional dress" because many times I will just come in wearing slacks and a polo shirt and I won't have a tie on because either I'm painting that day or I'm doing something. They constantly want you in a tie the whole time.

Yeah, it has an impact on my psyche. It's a drag. It's a constant uphill battle.

Bard went on to say that he served as the department chair for the fine arts and that he worked hard, bringing his school to an award-winning status in Virginia High School League competitions but that the evaluations did not reflect those facts. Though

Bard and others felt discouraged, “little to none” was the response given by two of the theatre arts teachers when asked about the impact of the evaluation on their teaching.

*Teacher Responses to Question 9: What training did you receive in order to understand the evaluation system?* Three of the teachers commented that they most likely received training as new teachers when they began their positions in their current school districts; however, two of those teachers could not recall anything specific regarding that training. One teacher said that a mentor was assigned at the beginning of their teaching position. However, half (four) of the teachers said that they received no training at all and that for many of them, the first time that they encountered the evaluation process was during a pre-conference with their administrator before their first teacher observation.

Another major pattern that emerged for theatre arts teachers was the lack of differentiation in the evaluation process between the job performance of teachers with unrelated job descriptions, such as classroom teachers and theatre teachers. All eight teachers responded that there was no differentiation at all. Fiona commented:

Because this is so formulated...everybody in the school does this thing so there's absolutely nothing that really differentiates me from another teacher as far as evaluation goes. It doesn't break down content at all. Does she know her content? So if I say yes, I know my content really well. No one is the wiser. And they come in and sit and watch—they would say, well, she looks like she knows what she is talking about. There is no one sitting there who would say, hmmm, that's not what I learned (about theatre). Because they haven't. It's very generic.

Lack of content knowledge was another pattern that emerged for theatre teachers. Many were concerned that their administrators could not help them to become better teachers because they lacked the knowledge of the discipline itself. This pattern would repeat itself in the response to other questions.

*Teacher Responses to Question 11: What links exist between evaluation data and planned staff development?* All eight teachers reported that no links existed between evaluation data and planned staff development. Several commented that staff development was driven by test scores or was driven from top-down decisions from the district.

*Teacher Responses to Question 12: How does the evaluation process promote your professional growth?* In half of the cases, theatre arts teachers reported that the evaluation process did nothing to promote their professional growth. Only Bard responded positively to this question by stating:

For me, it opens doors for me because I can choose a project—so I can collaborate with another teacher on a project or I can look at diversity as a project...maybe I'll look at these projects and use that as a way to bring more African-American students into the theatre program. Why are they not involved?

However, Bard was aware that this interpretation of professional growth was born of his own self-assessment and said, "No, that's just me. And that's what I make out of my own evaluation."

Most of the other teachers felt as if the evaluation process did not promote any professional growth as educators and even farther removed was the possibility of professional growth for the purposes of their subject matter, the craft of theatre.

*Teacher Responses to Question 13: To what degree does your current evaluation process accurately assess your job performance?* Seven of the eight teachers said that their current evaluation process did not accurately assess their job performance because the nature of teaching theatre is so unique. Alexa described it this way:

Theatre differs in that it is an academic course, where the background must be learned, there is a studio application to that background and then everything happens after school. Now some teachers do it differently, and they go OK, we are rehearsing everything in class. That's their prerogative. If it was only a studio production class, I don't think that the evaluation process could assess the job performance because it is so hard to tell, for an outsider to tell at what point you are at in your rehearsal process. I can lecture, and I mean, any of us who have been in the field for a number of years can immediately lecture and have a teachable moment on any aspect of a production of what you are studying. For a younger theatre teacher it would be much tougher. And actually the younger theatre teacher using only the classroom for as a rehearsal period is missing the boat. Because if they don't have that historic structure of culture and society and study of the playwrights, the physics of lighting, all of those things, if they don't have that, they are not going to get the degree of quality in their outside productions. So, it would depend. If I were just being evaluated in the classroom, fine, you know it's an OK evaluation, with huge generalities, nothing specific and you know it could be used unfairly because it is not an objective process by any means. With that subjectivity you have to be liked or appreciated or at least respected and if the person doesn't like you... they could really have some

problems with your classroom teaching, um and that is really definite in the fine arts area, particularly with theatre.

This response from Alexa dovetails the responses from many of the other theatre teachers in regards to Question 13. Seven of the eight teachers said that the process did not accurately assess their job performance. One said that the portfolio she needed to maintain served as a “scrapbook” and that she felt that it was “busy work”. Heather, who was one of two theatre arts teachers working in a performing arts school, responded that informal feedback provided accuracy even though that information was not part of the formal evaluation. She remarked:

...the formal evaluation with observations, tools, checklists and all of that does nothing to evaluate what I do as a director, producer, confessor, nursemaid and all of that...but because there are other people in the program, other principals, who do observe when I am here at ten o'clock at night and do give me feedback on that informally—they know how hard I work and how much I do and there are sometimes if we are a family, I feel like the favorite child.

And David remarked:

...it will capture some of the facts of it but it won't capture the flavor and it won't necessarily give you a sense of everything that is going into the job performance. Like if it catches you on a bad day or even just on an average day it may not capture everything that goes into the overall job performance.

These findings generally are consistent with the literature. Direct observation provides data on a single aspect of the performance of teachers—that of their own

behaviors in the classroom on a given day and time—not on the impact they make upon students (DiPaola & Hoy, 2008).

*Teacher Responses to Question 15: What procedures are in place to ensure the confidentiality of teacher performance reviews?* Half (four) of the teachers responded that the conferences were private or held behind closed doors. Half (four) of the teachers commented that the completed evaluations were placed in their mailboxes. One was uncertain as to how the process worked from year to year.

*Teacher Responses to Question 16: How does the performance evaluation protocol ensure objectivity in the evaluation process?* Seven of the eight teachers said that it did not ensure objectivity and that performance evaluations were subjective, based on the person evaluating them. This pattern of problems with bias was evident in statements the participants made. Emily said:

Rapport could be construed as subjective if you don't get along with that administrator, if they don't understand your discipline. If you are under the unfortunate circumstance of having an administrator that doesn't understand the value or see the value of your discipline then you are in trouble.

Other teachers would confirm this. Clay commented on the process as one based on trust in the interactions with administrators, "I don't know. It's a trust thing, I guess. I mean you have to trust that the person who is going to you evaluate you to be objective."

But other teachers felt that regardless of the relationship that the evaluation process was subjective and problematic. Fiona said:

It's very subjective, I would say...because going back to domain one—do I know my content. That's—do you really know if I know my content--by whose standards? There are all these little blanks, there are some that are very cut and dry—like SOLs on the board, they are either there or they are not. That's objective. But then there's one that just says “managing student behavior” well, I'm sure to the naked eye, or to anyone walking in to my classroom, half the time it's going to look chaos—but it's very controlled chaos, maybe it's improvisation, maybe we're doing a warm-up and it's going to look like chaos but it's not. So that could very easily somebody could say it's out of control, she has no idea what she is doing. Then there is one here that says showing professionalism—well, again, what does that mean?

The response from Fiona is reflected in the literature. Johnson (1990) interviewed 115 teachers and found that “teachers roundly criticized formal supervision and evaluation practices” (p.266). In addition, Johnson (1990) found that administrators focused on orderly performances of the evaluations procedures as opposed to the content of those evaluations. Another problem identified by teachers in the Johnson (1990) study was the rating forms, which left teachers confused when administrators evaluated items such as “professional demeanor” without the use of descriptions or further explanation (p. 268). The main dissatisfaction of teachers with administrators as evaluators was what the teachers saw as a basic lack of competence on the part of administrators to evaluate subject matter (Johnson, 1990).

The responses from the theatre teachers as a collective group revealed patterns that repeated themselves throughout the interviews including the unique nature of



teaching and evaluating theatre and the impact that interactions have with those who evaluate the performing arts. In addition, the interviews revealed patterns such as the lack of training in the evaluation process, the lack of job descriptions as well as the disconnect in some areas related to evaluating theatre teachers, such as the lack of objectivity in the evaluation instruments themselves and the lack of objectivity for those who use them.

#### *Administrator Responses*

The following table represents the patterns that emerged across all eight administrators. Individual responses to the interview questions can be found in Table 20. A discussion of these responses can be found following Table 22.

Table 22: Emergent Patterns from Cross-Case Studies: Administrators

<p><b>Emergent Patterns from Cross-Case Studies: Administrators</b></p>	Administrator A	Administrator B	Administrator C	Administrator D	Administrator E	Administrator F	Administrator G	Administrator H	Percentage of Administrators
<p>Pattern: Observation as most widely used form of teacher performance evaluation</p>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	100%
<p>Pattern: Teacher observation form/summative evaluation form as most widely used tool for teacher performance evaluation</p>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	100%
<p>Pattern: In the evaluation process, teacher strengths and weaknesses are determined by administrator through the use of comments/narrative</p>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	100%
<p>Pattern: Evaluation process does not differentiate, instead comments made by administrator evaluating are the determining factor</p>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	100%
<p>Pattern: Administrators informed of evaluation procedures through the principal</p>	•	•	•	•		•		•	75%
<p>Pattern: Employee appraisals are communicated through formal conferences and behind closed doors</p>	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	87.5%
<p>Pattern: Red flags for administrators are classroom management and discipline</p>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	100%
<p>Pattern: No differentiation between the job performance of teachers with unrelated job descriptions, such as theatre teachers and classroom teachers.</p>	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	87.5%

Pattern: The current evaluation process does not accurately assess the job performance of theatre arts teachers.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	100%
Pattern: The performance evaluation protocol does not ensure objectivity in the evaluation process.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	100%

While Table 20 represents all of the individual responses from both theatre teachers and administrators, Table 22 represents the emergent patterns across all eight administrators. A second coder, a principal with years of evaluation experience, reviewed the data collected from all eight administrators and teachers. The following is a comparison of the eight administrators who participated in the study.

*Administrator Responses to Question 1: Describe the evaluation process from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.* Eight of the eight administrators interviewed reported that teacher observation was the largest part the evaluation process. Some of these observations included a pre-conference, while others included only a formal post-conference. Two of the administrators revealed that portfolio review of some type was included as part of the evaluation process. In one district, performance targets were included as part of the evaluation process. These performance targets were determined by the superintendent or at the district level and included as goals for all of the teachers, regardless of subject taught. However, it was up to each teacher as to how these goals would be implemented and evaluated. Debra described the process:

Target one—school-wide goal to promote the importance of reading, target two--- departmental goal—goal to implement student learning center strategies to improve and enhance students’ writing and reading skills each nine week. At the

end of the year, they indicate their degree of accomplishment, whether they exceeded expectation, met expectation, did not meet expectation...they meet with us at, they meet with me, at the end of the year and we talk about it. But the bottom line is: I should be seeing that when I do their observations...you see what I am saying? I should see they how they've implemented the goals.

*Administrator Responses to Question 1a: Describe the tools or instruments included in the procedures.* The tools or instruments included in the procedures included teacher observation forms for all eight of the eight administrators. Most of the administrators, like Hannah, described an "observation form which is just a brief checklist" where "narrative could be included in the margins." Of the eight administrators, one administrator described the teacher observation form that she created for herself to use in the classroom. Catherine served as the director of a performing arts high school and created a simple form that she described:

It's a simple form, but I do have a few things on it. On the top of the form there is my name, their name, the date I came to observe, the time that I was actually in the class, the class itself like Theatre Level I, Theatre Level II, the number of students in the class, were lesson plans presented to the observer, was the objective on the board, and was technology used. Think that's the only thing that I ask on the observation on the section at the top. Then the first section is commendations and the second section is recommendations and the third section is comment by the teacher.

Catherine said that she created the form in order to have something that would be more effective to use with theatre than the current teacher evaluation observation form

used by her district. She described the current form used by the county that was still being used even though she was no longer a teacher in the arts. Catherine described the form:

Hickory County used to have a check-off list when I was a teacher and it was the most unhelpful, stupid thing. I mean they were checking off things that had nothing to do with what I was doing content-wise or with the curriculum it was checking off...just stupid things. They were checking off how clean your classroom room was—which had nothing to do with how the teacher teaches. I mean, yes, the teacher has a hand in keeping the classroom clean but a lot of time that’s a custodial issue. It was checking off whether your objectives were on the board—(which is why) I use recommendation and commendation instead.

*Administrator Responses to Question 1b: How were you informed of these procedures?* The majority of administrators (six out of eight) said that they followed the procedures set in place by their principals or district. Two of the administrators learned of these procedures through departmental meetings or through professional development implemented by the district that they attended as they began their careers with the district.

*Administrator Responses to Question 3: Describe how your evaluation process addresses strengths and weaknesses for those being evaluated.* Eight out of eight administrators commented that strengths and weaknesses were addressed through written comment provided to teacher by them. Several administrators commented that the teacher observation form included a place for them to “rate” a teacher’s performance.

Brian described it this way:

It addresses it in terms of the feedback and in terms of the rating system that you have. Exceeds expectations, etc. But in terms of the feedback that's really the most valued feedback for the teachers of course has to come through the conversations that you have with them about instruction. That kind of feedback is more motivational, more value-added time for the teachers. The simple 'needs improvement' or the proficiency rating really doesn't have any meaning until you sit down with them and tell them what it actually means. And here's why I gave you that rating, what I observe adds or equals this.

Brian, like the other administrators, felt that his written narrative outweighed the rating system in terms of the usefulness of the tool.

*Administrator Responses to Question 4: How do you ensure that evaluation data of theatre arts teachers follows legal guidelines and is conducted in a confidential manner?* Though the responses were different for this question, seven of the administrators agreed that the confidentiality was handled. In some cases it was at the hands of the administrator, and in some cases it followed district policy. In one case, however, evaluation was not following county policy. Hannah, who had been in her current district thirteen years, described the situation:

At our department chairs training we were told that we are not legally—we are not supposed to be doing evaluations. We are not supposed to be doing evaluations of our cohorts—but anyways, that's a whole other story (laughs). But I've been doing the evaluations as long as I've been here. That's what we were told at our county-wide department chairs training...that we were really not

supposed to be doing this. But there's no way that all of those principals could get to all the teachers—there's no way.

Hannah, as director of the performing arts center, went on to describe that she handled all of the evaluation processes with her teachers from pre-conferences, to observations, to post-conferences, as well as completing the summative evaluation forms with teachers. Hannah did not seem troubled by these circumstances. When asked by the researcher if she wanted to comment further on the circumstances in which she found herself and how they came to be, Hannah replied: "I don't know—it's just our county!"

*Administrator Responses to Question 4a: What processes are in place to ensure that performance reviews are conducted in a professional and constructive manner?* All but two (six out of eight) administrators did not comment that their performance reviews were either professionally communicated or that they were conducted in a constructive manner. Instead, they commented that the evaluation procedures followed the district policy. Andrea commented:

They talk about teachers who disagree and what recourse they have in terms of putting something written in the evaluation but there's a lot, and of course because it's legal, you know, there's a lot of focus on when there is a problem this is what we do--rather than on the teachers who are doing a good job but are still going through this process in the hopes of becoming even better than they already are and I tend to think that we don't do as good a job in working with those teachers.

And Brian remarked:

There is only a time-line, in terms of when you have to do, and when you have to complete these by and then that rubric that I described—what does a proficiency mean, what does exceeds expectations mean, etc. And that's it. There is no professional development for administrators there is no dialogue or real discussion for what this should look like or what this looks like—there is none of that.

*Administrator Responses to Question 5: Describe the manner in which the results of employee appraisals were communicated.* Seven of the eight administrators said that they met with theatre arts teachers in a formal, closed-door conference after an observation form had been completed. In most cases, administrators would present the teachers with a summative evaluation report that they were asked to sign. Copies of this evaluation report would be distributed to the teachers. In one case, the case of Catherine, a post-conference was sometimes informal and a draft of the summative evaluation report was sent via email.

*Administrator Responses to Question 6: How does the evaluation process differentiate among teacher levels of performance and experience?* In most cases, the number of observations that a new teacher received were different. This was the case for six of the eight administrators. But all eight of the eight administrators concluded that it was not the tool/s used in the evaluation process but how the tool/s was/were used that was the determining factor. Debra explained that she expected newer teachers to have a more difficult time in the classroom and that she made concessions for that:

I'm not so sure we differentiate—if it's a new teacher—we for example, it's nothing for us to say, let's say, we're going to a new teacher's classroom and



maybe the lesson wasn't as strong as we'd like, it's nothing for an administrator to say you know, I'll come back another time...I mean that has happened, because you know, they are human beings.

Debra also explained that forms were the same, "...because the form, the form is pretty generic across the board." Because the observation form was "generic", Debra used her experience as an administrator to determine what things that she would look for and what red flags caught her attention in determining how to evaluate her teachers.

*Administrator Responses to Question 6a: Describe your "look-fors" and "red flags" in the teacher evaluation process.* Again, administrators commented that the teacher observation form did not prove useful in most cases that instead it was the administrator's use of narrative or scripting that captured these teacher behaviors in the evaluation process. The "look-fors" were different for every administrator and included:

- student engagement,
- Socratic questioning,
- instructional strategies,
- rapport with students,
- evidence of planning,
- time on task,
- positive classroom environment, and
- proper techniques in the arts being taught.

The "red flags" were the same for all eight administrators. All of the administrators concluded that classroom management was the number one red flag for them. Several of them used descriptions such as "chaos" and "discipline" but in every

single description the phrase classroom management was used. One administrator said that classroom management was a “red flag” but that mistreatment of students was also a concern, though she had never seen a student actually mistreated during her time as an administrator. These findings reflect the literature. Johnson (1990) found that administrators focused on orderly performances of the evaluations procedures as opposed to the content of those evaluations.

*Administrator Responses to Question 8: What training did you receive to implement the evaluation system?* Two administrators received no training. One administrator commented that her program was new but that she still had not received any training. Two administrators had learned scripting or narrative through district training. Two administrators learned peer-coaching techniques as teachers and had applied that training to their current positions as administrators. One administrator, who created her own evaluation system for use in the school of the performing arts, had this to say:

At Brigadoon University, I received wonderful training and in several classes and then I've worked with an assistant principal, at Wellpoint County, when I became department chairman at the Center of the Arts and she and I worked one or two together before I felt really comfortable doing that on my own. And then I developed my own style.

Because Catherine had developed her own evaluation system, she did not receive any formal training to implement the evaluation system from the district in which she worked. And though she was confident that she had created an evaluation form that would serve her theatre teacher's purposes, she was caught off-guard when asked how her evaluation

process differentiated between the job performance of teachers with unrelated job descriptions, such as classroom teachers and theatre teachers.

*Administrator Responses to Question 10: How does your evaluation process differentiate between the job performance of teachers with unrelated job descriptions, such as classroom teachers and theatre teachers?* Catherine was taken aback by this question and after a pause, responded:

I'm not exactly sure...I've never done a formal observation on an unrelated position than the arts. I've walked through a lot of classrooms and I can't comment on content, because I don't know content, but I can comment on classroom management because I know when it's working. I recognize it.

Seven of the eight administrators said that there was no differentiation between the job performances of teachers with unrelated job descriptions, such as classroom teachers and theatre teachers. Several of the administrators did not see a need for differentiation. Debra commented, "I'm not sure I understand that...well to me, a classroom teacher is a classroom teacher whether they teach theatre arts or whatever... I mean, I don't think it makes any difference."

*Administrator Responses to Question 11: What links exist between evaluation data and planned staff development?* Two administrators commented that the division test scores were what drove the planned staff development for their schools.

Five of the eight administrators remarked that there were no links between staff development and planned staff development. One administrator, Emily, commented:

It's interesting that you should ask that because we're actually going through a process of revamping the professional and staff development that we have for the

county right now...a lot of times we find that we have this checklist to go by but it doesn't align with what we are currently doing...if that person needs classroom management are we providing that for them--if we make that suggestion in the evaluation?

*Administrator Responses to Question 12: How does the evaluation process promote the professional growth of teachers with varying skills and experience levels?*

In two cases, opportunities for professional growth were created by the teachers' personal goals. In one case (Catherine), the evaluation process did not promote professional growth. Instead, Catherine said, "But what happens is they help each other and it's not initiated from me. Like I said, we are developing a collegial atmosphere there and we help each other."

*Administrator Responses to Question 13: To what degree does your current evaluation process accurately assess the job performance of theatre arts teachers?* Six out of eight administrators replied that the current evaluation process did not accurately assess the job performance of theatre teachers. Brian remarked that the supervisor made the difference in an accurate assessment. He responded:

No. I don't. I think that given a different administrator or a different supervisor—I think it hinges a great deal on who is your supervising administrator, who is your primary evaluator. I tend to be very flexible and very open minded. You know, I'm learning from them and they are learning from me. But I think you put someone else in that position it might be completely different in terms of their interpretation of the evaluation process.

Two administrators thought that the process was fair if final performances or other outside responsibilities beyond classroom observation were included in the evaluation. In those two cases, the administrators said that they included these outside activities in their summative reports but that the teacher observation form did not have a place specifically for theatre performances. Instead, they added comments to the summative evaluation to remark upon added responsibilities that the theatre teacher assumed.

*Administrator Responses to Question 14: How is information generated from teacher observations and job performances documented and shared with teachers?* All eight administrators said that summative evaluation reports were shared in post-conferences with teachers at the end of an evaluation cycle. In most cases, the summative report was signed by both the administrator and teacher and copies were distributed to all involved parties. Where portfolios were used, the administrators did not mention how these were handled. Several administrators said that though the summative reports were handled behind closed doors, some thought that they did not do a good job with the process itself. Andrea said:

The summative is supposed to be a very formal conversation. Mine are very informal. Sometimes it's just a hey, here's what I'm thinking, uh, if you have any questions come on back to me and we'll talk about it further. I don't think anybody's ever surprised what's on the summative because we talk all year long even if it's not in a formal sense. Again, it's like everybody's so glad to just have it done with that...and unfortunately it's done so early in the year that for the last three months of school nobody's evaluating anybody. It's a frustrating thing.

You know, give me thirty-four teachers that I am supposed evaluate and how good of a job do you think that I am going to be able to do?

*Administrator Responses to Question 15: What procedures are in place to ensure the confidentiality of teacher performance reviews?* In addition to the summative reports being conducted behind closed doors, there were other procedures in place to ensure the confidentiality of teacher performance reviews. Seven of the eight administrators said that all files belonging to teachers were only handled by administrators and school personnel in the central office. Several administrators described sealed envelopes with the word “confidential” written across the front. Again, the administrators commented that summative evaluation conferences were conducted behind closed doors. In only one case did teachers have access to teacher performance reviews. Frederick described that the CIA in his building had access to evaluation information generated from observations conducted via walk-throughs:

With the walk-through again, the CIA is privy to all of the comments, good, bad or indifferent, um, but you have a lot of the leaders in the building in the CIA and people who do a good job of being discreet...and the other thing is that...rather than talking to bunches of people other than the teacher we make it, we try to make it a practice to go directly to the teacher.

When asked about the CIA, Frederick described these school leaders, “...usually a teams of two or three teachers and administrators mix and we usually get about six teachers—each team has about six teachers to evaluate.” In the case of Frederick, both teachers and administrators who were members of the CIA had access to information generated from teacher observations.

*Administrator Responses to Question 16: How does the performance evaluation protocol ensure objectivity in the evaluation process?* In some cases, the responses were candid. Frederick responded, “That is a good question...because what one person considers engagement another person might not consider engagement...so I’m not sure whether the form...allows for total objectivity.” Other responses were similar. This pattern, problems with bias, was prevalent throughout the interviews.

In the case of Debra, she believed that the process was objective but her response indicated that it was based on her observations. Debra remarked, “Well, I think the script is pretty objective—I mean I can only write down what I see...” She then generated her strengths and weaknesses from what she viewed in the classroom for the teacher being observed, which indicated a subjective response. In describing the process of evaluation regarding objectivity in the process, Andrea raised some concerns:

They talk about a welcoming classroom environment or a classroom environment conducive to learning and how you define that may very well be based in the evaluator’s perspective and sometimes when you do cross disciplines you are going to get some wacky results. If you have a math teacher who has certain expectations about how students are going to do this and then how they are going to move to this...there isn’t that flexibility...and then that person is all of a sudden doing a fine arts evaluation where that’s just not the way the class flows-- then they’re not going to be perceived as being a good teacher.

And Catherine observed, “Well, objectivity, this is where it’s like all things art.” These findings are reflected in the literature. Traditional assessments appear to reinforce superior-subordinate managerial relationships in which the evaluator stands outside the

process and makes judgments about the teacher (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Peterson, 2000). A manager-oriented evaluation system affords teachers little voice in the analysis of their own practice. In addition, such a system may serve to circumscribe the construction of knowledge and to foster a monologue instead of a dialogue in the evaluation process.

Tucker (1997) described “the crux of the problem” as being principal’s inflated self-ratings of their understanding of teacher evaluation (p. 104). Regardless of the assessments of outside observers and evaluation experts about the factors that enable or disable effective evaluation, the beliefs and attitudes of principals themselves about these factors as well as their beliefs about their own skills and abilities are likely to impact substantially the effective implementation of evaluation policies (Painter, 2000). Lastly, reliance on administrators as the central evaluator leads to sociological domination, which in turn detracts from teacher functioning and morale (Peterson, 2000).

### *Conclusion*

During the interview process, the researcher arrived at a deeper understanding of how interactions are handled between theatre arts teachers and administrators played a larger role than expected in teacher performance evaluation in the case studies. In addition to the importance of evaluator/evaluatee interaction, lack of balanced evaluations, problems with bias in the case studies, and the lack of time necessary for the evaluation process, other patterns emerged in the cross-case analysis. These patterns represented in the cross-case analysis for theatre arts teachers included:

- observation as the most widely used form of teacher performance evaluation;
- summative evaluation form as the most widely used tool for teacher performance evaluation;



- the lack of a job description to tie into teacher performance evaluation;
- the evaluation process impacts self-esteem or psyche as opposed to impacting teaching strategies or teaching results;
- teachers received no training to understand the evaluation process;
- the lack of differentiation in the evaluation process for teachers with unrelated job descriptions;
- the lack of links between teacher performance evaluation and planned staff development;
- the evaluation process does not promote professional growth for those theatre teachers in the study;
- the evaluation process does not accurately assess job performance for those theatre teachers in the study;
- employee appraisals were communicated behind closed doors through formal conferences/the administration provided confidentiality in communicating summative reports for those theatre teachers in the study; and finally,
- the performance evaluation protocol does not ensure objectivity in the evaluation process.

Major patterns represented in the cross-case analysis for the administrators who took part in this study included:

- observation as the most widely used form of teacher performance evaluation;
- summative evaluation form as the most widely used tool for teacher performance evaluation;

- within the evaluation process, teacher strengths and weaknesses are determined by the administrators through the use of narrative or comments;
- the teacher performance evaluation process does not differentiate, instead comments or narrative provided are the determining factor;
- administrators were informed of the evaluation procedures through the principal;
- red flags for administrators were classroom management and discipline;
- the lack of differentiation in the evaluation process for teachers with unrelated job descriptions;
- the current evaluation process did not accurately assess the job performance of theatre arts teachers
- the evaluation process did not promote professional growth for theatre arts teachers; and finally,
- employee appraisals were communicated behind closed doors through formal conferences/the administration provided confidentiality in communicating summative reports for those theatre teachers in the study; and finally,
- the performance evaluation protocol does not ensure objectivity in the evaluation process.

This pattern, the lack of objectivity in the evaluation process or problems with bias, was a pattern in the cross-case analysis for both theatre arts teachers and administrators and in many ways was the most closely connected pattern that emerged between cases or individual pairs of teachers and administrators.

Finally, the following table and subsequent descriptions align the patterns of both teachers and administrators with the Joint Committee Standards. These are discussed in Chapter Five as they relate to each research question.

Table 23: Theatre Teacher and Administrator Patterns Aligned to the Joint Committee Standards by Category

PROPRIETY STANDARDS	
Appropriate Policies and Procedures	No job description to link to evaluation process
Access to Evaluation Information	Confidentiality not a concern Uncertain about legal guidelines
Interactions with Evaluatees Balanced Evaluations Conflict of Interest	Poor interactions perceived as poor evaluation process Administrators did not have consensus as to what aspects of teaching they were seeking as ideal Administrators were in agreement as to what constituted poor teaching—class management
UTILITY STANDARDS	
Constructive Orientation	Theatre teachers perceived performance evaluation as having an impact on their self-esteem as opposed to helping them self-regulate their teaching strategies
Evaluator Qualifications Functional Reporting	Training to learn or to understand teacher performance evaluation system was limited in every case for both teachers and administrators
Explicit Criteria	No evaluation systems differentiated for teachers of varying disciplines
Professional Development	In almost every case, no links between planned staff development and evaluation data Staff development driven by student test scores
FEASIBILITY STANDARDS	
Ensure Ease of Implementation Efficiency Time and Resources Adequacy of Funding Viability from Political Standpoint	Administrators did not believe that the evaluation systems were meaningful or that they were a priority for the school system and did not have adequate support in professional growth In half the cases, what was determined important for teacher growth for all teachers as a whole was determined by the

	district
<b>ACCURACY STANDARDS</b>	
Validity Orientation Defined Expectations	Theatre teachers did not believe the current evaluation system accurately assessed their job performance
Analysis of Content Documented Purposes and Procedures Systematic Data Control	Theatre teachers and administrators were safeguarded against misuse of evaluation information within their respective districts Theatre teachers concluded that the evaluation was worthless due to lack of time for post conferences/time to discuss results of evaluations
Bias	Theatre teachers said that the evaluation process did not ensure objectivity; subjective based on person evaluating them Administrators concluded that the evaluation process did not ensure objectivity

The table reflects the findings as they are connected to the Joint Committee Standards of Evaluation. The following summary combines the above table as well as the themes of both theatre teachers and administrators. The summary also represents the major findings of the study in brevity or a representation of the overarching patterns. The following findings are highlighted with implications for the discussion found in Chapter Five and with implications for evaluation systems that theatre teachers and administrators are faced with in Virginia:

1. Observation (with pre- and post-conferences) is the most frequent type of evaluation process and most theatre teachers find it ineffective.
2. The school district teacher evaluation processes that “backed off” on evaluation after tenure reinforced the belief that evaluation was an “institutional obligation.”
3. In most cases, there was no job description that linked teacher expectations to the evaluation process, leaving theatre teachers confused about their responsibilities

in the classroom and administrators confused as to what aspects of theatre teacher performance should serve as guideposts for evaluation.

4. Most administrators were unaware or uncertain as to whether or not their evaluation processes followed legal guidelines; most administrators assumed that because they were following school policy that they were following legal guidelines.
5. Interactions between administrators and theatre teachers determined how each party viewed the evaluation process; poor interactions were perceived as poor evaluation processes.
6. There was no administrative consensus as to what aspects of teaching they were seeking that would be considered as ideal teaching in the evaluation process.
7. Conversely, all administrators were in agreement as to what constituted a poor teacher performance and that was classroom management.
8. Theatre teachers greatest concern was that the level of activity that took place during the normal course of a theatre class (i.e., group work, theatre games, vocal exercises, acting and directing exercises, etc.) would be perceived as poor classroom management and, thus, they would receive poor evaluations as a result.
9. Theatre teachers perceived performance evaluation as having a negative impact on their self-esteem as opposed to helping them self-regulate on their teaching strategies.
10. Theatre teachers reported that their administrators could not evaluate them on content of their subject matter.

11. Training to learn or to understand the evaluation system was limited or non-existent in every case for both theatre teachers and administrators, and while the theatre teachers did not believe their administrators understood what it was they taught, the administrators did believe that they were evaluating the teachers effectively.
12. Most administrators believed that despite the flaws in the evaluation system, they could make it work for them, whereas theatre teachers did not believe the current evaluation system or how it was used was helpful to them.
13. There were no evaluation systems that differentiated for teachers of varying disciplines; however, all of theatre teachers commented that their administrators did not understand at least some aspect of their job as a theatre teacher.
14. There were no links between planned staff development and evaluation data; in most cases student test scores drove staff development.
15. Although both theatre teachers and administrators believed that the evaluation systems they used were subjective and subject to bias, most administrators believed they were fair evaluators and they used the evaluation process with objectivity despite the instrument's shortcomings.

These fifteen points are an indication that the evaluation process, regardless of school district, is in need of revision.

## Chapter Five: Discussion

### *Introduction*

I would say that *we* are our own evaluators. Certainly, as a master teacher, I'm pretty intuitive. I would say: hmm, the kids aren't getting this. And then I would say: let me try it this way. But for an evaluator to come in and watch me teach and say, "Why don't you try it this way?" That wouldn't happen. They have no clue. Or even worse, they wouldn't even know what to suggest. –Alexa, theatre arts teacher

When I first became an AP and was put in charge of English and fine arts and foreign language--that is also a discipline that looks a little different—I went to each of the department heads and said, 'I want to create something an informal tool to use for walk-throughs for look fors.' You know the hardest part for me with theatre is how much space is necessary to do it and managing that space...that, as an administrator, makes me neurotic. Knowing that there are four groups out of your sight because they have to have that space to work because they can't be on top of each other--so that makes me crazy. –Andrea, assistant principal

Based on the findings of this study, it appears clear that the evaluation processes for theatre arts teachers in Virginia are in need of revision. Despite clear expectations set forth by the Joint Committee Standards for Educational Evaluation, the school districts in

this study are failing their theatre arts teachers and the students whom they serve.

Current methods for the evaluation of teachers appear to have limited applicability for the majority of performing arts teachers due to the specialized nature of what it is they teach (Maranzano, 2000; Peterson, 2000; Rush, 1997; Stronge, 2006; Taebel, 1990a, 1990b; Wolf, 1973). Instructional leaders whose responsibilities include observation and evaluation may find additional challenges when charged with evaluating performing arts teachers using general educational models. In order for educational leaders to make informed evaluation decisions, it is important for them to consider the contributions of performing arts teachers. It generally is held that administrators do not have the expertise that theatre arts teachers have in the area of best practices in theatre education and, consequently, expertise in evaluation methods applicable for theatre arts teachers (Henniger, 2002; Landon, 1965).

The problem investigated by this study was to understand the issues surrounding evaluation in regards to performing arts (i.e., theatre/drama) teachers. As suggested by Rudestam and Newton (2007), this discussion chapter contains the following elements: a) brief delimitations and subsequent limitations of the study; b) an overview of the significant findings of the study or discussion by research question; c) implications for educational policy and practice; and d) recommendations for further research. The overview of the significant findings answers the research questions introduced at the beginning of this study regarding the evaluation of theatre arts teachers in Virginia. In answering these questions, comparison is made within administrator/teacher cases and the cross-case analysis in Chapter Four.

#### *Delimitations and Limitations of the Study*



The results of this study are based on voluntary participation of theatre arts teachers in Virginia and, therefore, may not reflect a complete range of experiences of those who teach theatre arts in other states. Additionally, factors may exist which substantially affect theatre arts teachers' responses that were not identified in this study. For example, the relationship between the administrator and the theatre teacher may have an impact on the perceptions of the participants in the study; additionally, the success of the theatre program based on the participants' perspectives may influence the responses given.

Of those who were asked to participate, two administrators refused via telephone or email. In two cases, the theatre arts teacher had given consent and completed the interview process and afterwards the administrator refused participation. Those participants were not included in the final pair count. In one county, a theatre teacher volunteered to take part in the study but was then unable to participate after her principal refused to grant her permission. Other participants, both theatre teachers and administrators, did not respond to emails or written inquiries and, therefore, were not included in the study.

Other teachers did not meet the criteria of the study and therefore were not included. When asked if she would be a willing participant in the study, one theatre arts teacher admitted, "I don't think I meet your criteria if you are only looking at teachers who are evaluated as theatre teachers. I wish they would evaluate me for theatre because that's the majority of what I teach. But I've only ever been evaluated in the one and only English class that I teach. It's like the rest of what I do is invisible!" This teacher's sentiments reflected the findings of the nationwide study of high school theatre programs

conducted by the Education Theatre Association that found that principals often hired theatre teachers for their ability to teach other subjects, such as English, as their primary responsibility and theatre as a secondary subject (Seidel, 1991). In this case, the teacher was clearly teaching theatre as her primary subject and yet was being evaluated on her singular English class. Seidel (1991) described this phenomenon as reflecting the “discipline’s secondary status” (p. 6).

Finally, creating a model for the evaluation of theatre teachers was beyond the scope of this initial study. However, understanding what theatre arts teachers perceive as the pitfalls to current evaluation as well as discussing evaluation experiences and the use of current models can lead to future explorations in the area of teacher performance evaluation in Virginia. Additional limitations of the study include the nature of the study itself: based solely on perceptions and practices of the participants and not current models.

### *Research Questions*

The guiding research questions are the framework used to address the significant findings of the study. The case studies as well as the cross-case analyses produced the answers to the following questions:

11. How do theatre teachers and administrators perceive performance evaluation practices?

(The Joint Committee of Standards Evaluation informs the following four research questions)

12. How do theatre teachers and administrators perceive the quality of evaluation in terms of propriety standards?

13. How do theatre teachers and administrators perceive the quality of evaluation in terms of utility standards?
14. How do theatre teachers and administrators perceive the quality of evaluation in terms of feasibility standards?
15. How do theatre teachers and administrators perceive the quality of evaluation in terms of accuracy standards?

*Discussion by Research Question*

*Question 1: How do theatre teachers and administrators perceive performance evaluation practices?*

In terms of how theatre teachers and administrators perceived performance evaluation practices, most teachers and administrators described the evaluation processes as being primarily teacher observation, but they did not describe the value given to the process in similar terms. For the majority of cases, teacher performance evaluation consisted of pre-conference, observation, followed by post-conference with a teacher observation form completed by the administrator. The administrator added narrative to the form or in some cases administrators would write down everything that they saw in the class during an observation, or scripting. At the post-conference, theatre teachers and administrators met to discuss the classroom observation and then the summative evaluation report was signed by all parties and a copy distributed to the theatre arts teacher.

In some cases, administrators changed the process in to make it more applicable to their needs. Andrea said, "...you are supposed to pull out three positives and one area of growth—I cannot bring myself to do it that way, so I don't." Alexa concurred, "The

evaluation sheet for classroom observation is not bad for core subjects...but it tends to fall apart for the fine arts people.”

The reflections of the participants supported the previous findings in the literature regarding observation as the primary tool for evaluation and its failure to meet the needs of those who used it. Though observation is the most common method of teacher performance evaluation, primary reliance on formal and informal observations in evaluation present significant problems (e.g., contrived situation, very limited sample, only occurs in the classroom) (DiPaola & Hoy, 2008; Peterson, 2000; Stronge, 2006; Zepeda, 2006). Peterson (2000) stated:

Seventy years of empirical research on teacher evaluation show that current practices (administrator observation) do not improve teachers or accurately tell what happens in classrooms. Current procedures do not reward exemplary teachers. Despite obvious and longstanding problems, school districts continue to rely on principal reports (administrative observations). (p.18)

In one case, Catherine, who now served as the director of a performing arts public high school, felt the tools were so archaic that she created her own tool to evaluate her fine arts teachers. She commented:

Hickory County used to have a check-off list when I was a teacher and it was the most unhelpful, stupid thing. I mean they were checking off things that had nothing to do with what I was doing content-wise or with the curriculum it was checking off...just stupid things. They were checking off how clean your classroom room was—which had nothing to do with how the teacher teaches. It’s been a long time since I’ve seen one of those but just my impression is, why

would anybody come sit down and do a check-off, you are paying attention to a check-off, please pay attention to what I am teaching. Look and see if I am walking around the room, look and see if I'm reaching every single child, look and see if my point is taken, look and see if they are engaged in my lesson. I completely did not work well under those circumstances being a choral teacher. It might have worked better for a math teacher. So I use commendation and recommendation. My commendation and recommendation form came to me when I was working on my master's degree at State University and some of the course work that I took there. I just decided that some things needed to be refined just for me. It appeared that the evaluation process was even less important once teachers received tenure.

In some cases, the evaluation process did not hold as much merit once a teacher was tenured. Alexa described the process in her district:

Once you become tenured, it backs off considerably because of the tenure system in the state of Virginia...then they *finally* come in almost at the end of the time, trying to get your evaluation done at the end of the year, rushing to get your evaluation done; each one differs. The administrators who are pushed for time stay fifteen or twenty minutes.

In other cases, teacher performance evaluation ceased to exist at all after a teacher received tenure; instead teachers were observed by lead teachers who had received only departmental training in order to properly evaluate theatre arts teachers. Fiona commented:

This year, since it's my fifth year, I am not on formal evaluation. Every three years we are formally evaluated and I'm not in a formal evaluation year—so I think that's why I have not even been evaluated at all this year. Your first three years you are formally evaluated every year but after your third year you are kind of on your own...my fourth year and my fifth year I had no formal evaluation so next year I'll formal evaluation again. It happens every three years after your third year.

The comments above reflect the literature findings regarding how evaluation procedures are perceived. As Johnson (1990) noted, "Teachers regard the practice as an institutional obligation to be endured rather than an opportunity to be seized," (p. 266). In addition, the process has not changed since its inception in most cases. Andrea, an assistant principal, said, "And then from October until February we do the observation process and the forms haven't changed in forever and ever and ever so the classroom observation form is the same from year to year."

As for the teachers, all eight of the teachers described the teacher observation form as being the main evaluation tool. However, in most cases, theatre arts teachers did not feel that the forms captured what it was that they did professionally. These results confirm the previous findings in the literature which stated that direct observation fails to provide information about the teacher's expectations or intentions, the teacher's planning, or how materials are chosen and selected to match to students and objectives. Observations provide a limited perspective on long-range instructional continuity or day-to-day versatility; the teacher's involvement in the life of the school, the community, and the

profession are unlikely to be evaluated directly (Cangelosi, 1991). Stronge, Richard, and Catano (2008) stated:

- Classroom observations are prone to being artificial, especially when special lessons are prepared for a planned classroom observation visit. While a pre-conference, observation, post-conference sequence can be helpful for teacher development, it also can lead to an inaccurate view of what happens in the classroom on a day-to-day basis.
- Observation is useful for documenting only part of the important work that teachers do. Class visits can yield useful information about selected processes of teaching, such as instructional delivery and classroom management, but only a glimpse at teacher planning, student assessment, communication with parents and others, and professional development of the teacher. Perhaps most importantly, observations yield little or no information about the outcomes of teacher – student achievement.
- No matter how it is viewed, observation is a form of inspection, and inspection can be viewed as de-professionalizing.

These findings were echoed by the theatre arts teachers in this study. For example, Emily commented:

So the administrator saw one part of the lesson but it covered more than that so they didn't get to see the whole thing. It makes it impossible to see anything because they are only seeing bits and parts. They can see how I interact with the students and different things. But if they are trying to figure out how effective I am at evaluating my students or conveying information to my students then they need to come back.

These findings also reflect the previously cited literature regarding direct observation and its limitations. Direct observation provides data on a single aspect of the performance of teachers—that of their own behaviors in the classroom on a given day and time—not on the impact they make upon students (DiPaola & Hoy, 2008). Limited performance evidence is of special concern to theatre teachers, whose major performance responsibilities fall outside of the regular school schedule, as confirmed by previous findings in the literature (Lazarus, 2004). These major responsibilities can include theatre conferences, major productions and competition pieces. Classroom visits, even three or four visits per year for a full hour each, typically represent less than one-half of one percent of the actual teaching performance (Stronge & Tucker, 2003). Add this to the many hours of rehearsal and performance time outside of the classroom and the percentage is likely less than one half of one percent. Additionally, the complexity of theatre teachers' roles (in rehearsal and performances) requires that they spend many hours beyond what would some would consider classroom responsibilities. Heather commented, "...the formal evaluation with observations, tools, checklists and all of that does nothing to evaluate what I do as a director, producer, confessor, nursemaid and all of that..."

Most of the teachers were concerned because they believed the administrators who used the forms did not understand theatre and therefore the comments were not always helpful and those teachers who did believe that the administrator 'understood them' were from performing arts schools or their administrator in charge of evaluation had an arts background. In the two cases where portfolio reviews were used, one theatre arts teacher said that the portfolio she needed to maintain as part of her evaluation



process served as a “scrapbook” and that she felt that it was “busy work”. These results were reflected in the previous literature findings. Although teacher portfolios should reflect a teacher’s performance or talents, a portfolio with a heavy emphasis on amount of materials and documents without discrimination as to what is included has what Tucker, Stronge and Gareis (2002) called a “steamer trunk” effect (p. 3). Additionally, Stronge and Tucker (2003) concluded that if a portfolio becomes merely a paper chase, it invariably misses the mark of professional growth and improved performance evaluations. This was the case where teacher portfolios were used in the evaluation process.

In most cases, the theatre arts teachers did not perceive the evaluation process as having much merit. The primary tool for teacher evaluation was observation. In only two cases was portfolio review used. In the case of the administrators, many believed the process had some value but the responses were mixed.

*Question 2: How do theatre teachers and administrators perceive the quality of evaluation in terms of propriety standards?*

The Propriety Standards are intended to ensure that a personnel evaluation will be conducted legally, ethically, and with due regard for the welfare of the evaluatee and those involved in the evaluation. In terms of how theatre teachers and administrators perceive the quality of evaluation in terms of propriety standards, the findings were mixed based on the issue. The propriety standards include appropriate policies and procedures, access to evaluation information, interaction with evaluatees, balanced evaluations, and conflict of interest.

*Appropriate Policies and Procedures.* In terms of appropriate policies, the response from theatre teachers was that in most cases, there was no job description. The absence of which made connecting the evaluation process to reflect the aspects of what theatre teachers taught in the classroom impossible. In addition, many of the theatre teachers had separate contracts for coaching, and in some cases, they were evaluated on the hours that they put into their jobs after the daily teaching had ended. Some appreciated this aspect of the position, like Heather, who commented:

I do have two—feels like two full time jobs—and the formal evaluation with observations, tools, checklists and all of that does nothing to evaluate what I do as a director, producer, confessor, nursemaid and all of that...but because there are other people in the program, other principals, who do observe when I am here at ten o'clock at night and do give me feedback on that informally—they know how hard I work and how much I do...

Evaluating what theatre teachers do in the classroom was problematic in most of the cases because it was not possible to link a job description to the evaluation process as the job description was unclear or did not exist. In addition, the theatre arts teachers reported that they sometimes were not aware of exactly what they were being hired for and assumed that teaching theatre was to be their primary responsibility. However, without a job description they could not be certain of this. Fiona reported, "I was hired to teach theatre and then I found out that I had to teach a class called Senior Seminar because I teach at a magnet school. It's a class that gets them ready for college."

In addition, five theatre teachers reported that their discipline fell under the English Department in some cases and therefore they felt that they were disconnected

from other performing arts teachers. This result confirms the previous findings in the literature regarding what principals say that they are looking for when they seek teachers to fill theatre arts teacher positions. A study by Seidel (1991) found that principals often hired theatre teachers for their ability to teach other subjects, such as English, as their primary responsibility and theatre as a secondary subject. In addition, the study found that the criteria that principals use to evaluate candidates for when hiring an educator for a theatre position seems “to reflect the discipline’s secondary status” (Seidel, 1991, p. 6). The study found that 86 percent of principals were looking for some level of theatre experience (65 percent sought community theatre or university experience, 59 percent sought experience with high school theatre, 48 percent looked for technical theatre expertise); only 60 percent sought college or degree training and fewer than half required a prospective teacher to have majored in theatre.

The study further reported that only 40 percent of principals required that the teacher hired have a bachelor’s degree in theatre, just 9 percent required a master’s degree in theatre, and 9 percent considered a minor in theatre as sufficient qualification (Seidel, 1991). A little over a third of the principals surveyed, 36 percent, sought a certification in theatre. These were the findings, despite the principals’ surveyed responses that ranked the top three skills and attributes a student should have upon graduation being communication skills, critical thinking, and self-confidence, all traits that theatre teachers reported including in their curriculum. The study also found that principals were not aware of the value of theatre for other students as well as the school’s standing in the community (Seidel, 1991). Alexa described her experiences:

I don't think I've seen a job description. So I went to the school board office employment pages and I went to the policy manual. I have yet to find a job description for any teacher. And here's how it kind of gets around that: the human resources job description for teachers, I don't think exists for any kind of teacher view, or a public view, because they keep a running—they're open to receive applications at all times. Now if you were to go on to a coaching position or an administrative position, you'd find a job description for that. But teachers do not have, that I have found, a job description. Now if there is one, it's not easily accessible.

Later in the interview, she described evaluating her job in terms of how the job description was linked to the evaluation process. She stated:

And if I put garbage on the stage—what do they know? That is as much as part of my job, as the classroom experience. And of course we don't get paid for it like that...but chorus is in the same boat, band is the same boat—it's like you could be sitting around doing nothing all year and putting total garbage on those stages. You get a little pat on the back, OK your classroom management is fine...but you know, you cost the school \$6000 because you fried the light board here for example. Coaches have better job descriptions and better guidelines than theatre teachers. Not everybody has the same responsibilities—like one person is responsible for just the one act, and others have a full year of shows.

The theatre arts teachers in this study reported that they did not have or could not find job descriptions. Most had separate coaching contracts that listed their responsibilities for extra-curricular activities; without a specific job description, theatre

arts teachers were unclear as to what functions of their jobs would be evaluated, and often times they were uncertain as to what they would have to teach in addition to teaching theatre classes.

*Access to Evaluation Information.* In most cases, confidentiality was not an issue. However, the cross-case analysis revealed that most of the administrators did not know if the evaluation process followed legal guidelines and assumed that because they were conducting the evaluations and sharing them with evaluatees as instructed by their principals that the proper district policies must be in place. In one case, evaluation was clearly not following district policy. Hannah, who evaluated the entire fine arts department and who had been in her current district thirteen years, described the situation:

At our department chairs training we were told that we are not legally—we are not supposed to be doing evaluations. We are not supposed to be doing evaluations of our cohorts—but anyways, that’s a whole other story (laughs). But I’ve been doing the evaluations as long as I’ve been here. That’s what we were told at our county-wide department chairs training...that we were really not supposed to be doing this. But there’s no way that all of those principals could get to all the teachers—there’s no way.

Hannah, as director of the performing arts center, went on to describe that she handled all of the evaluation processes with her teachers from pre-conferences, to observations, to post-conferences, as well as completing the summative evaluation forms with teachers. Hannah did not seem troubled by these circumstances. When asked by the

researcher if she wanted to comment further on the circumstances in which she found herself and how they came to be, Hannah replied: “I don’t know—it’s just our county!”

*Interactions with Evaluatees, Balanced Evaluations, and Conflict of Interest.*

Perhaps one of the most revealing findings throughout the case studies as well as the cross-case analysis was the interactions with evaluatees and evaluators in terms of how they were affected by the evaluation process. In every case, how administrators interacted with theatre teachers was the basis for how the evaluation process was perceived. Those who had poor interactions did not feel like the evaluation system was helpful. These results confirm the previous findings reflected in the literature. Traditional assessments appear to reinforce superior-subordinate managerial relationships in which the evaluator stands outside the process and makes judgments about the teacher (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Peterson, 2000). A manager-oriented evaluation system affords teachers little voice in the analysis of their own practice. Such a system may serve to circumscribe the construction of knowledge and to foster a monologue instead of a dialogue in the evaluation process. Gabrielle’s comments reflected the majority of the comments made by the participants in this study. Gabrielle said, “How much more can I do? But I really believe that that came from the administration that was in place because as soon as that changed—I got all fours. And I don’t think that I did anything different...I think the timbre of things changed.”

These are pertinent issues because as revealed in the previous literature the quality of any school is directly linked to the performance of the individual people who work there (Stronge, 2006). Good evaluation practices lead to stronger relationships and mutual respect between administrators and teachers in most educational settings

(Witziers, Bosker & Kruger, 2003). The poor quality of the evaluation systems appeared to be driving a wedge between theatre teachers and their administrators in many of the cases. The previous literature confirmed these findings. A study by the Secondary Theatre Project, sponsored by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, defined five “crucial qualitative factors” for secondary theatre education (Seidel, 1991, p. 17). In order of their perceived significance to students, they were: the teacher; the policies and practices of the school district administration; dramatic production; community environment; and the theatre curriculum (Seidel, 1991). These factors are inextricably linked and yet the first two most important factors, teachers and the policies and practices of the administration, are disconnected (Seidel, 1991).

A conceptually sound and properly implemented evaluation system for teachers is an essential component for an effective school and by extension for the success student achievement (Stronge, 2006). In this study, theatre teachers reported that their evaluations were not balanced. The teacher observation forms had places to evaluate a teacher for content, but the administrators did not have expertise in the area of content. They stated that administrators did not understand what they taught in terms of content and therefore could not evaluate them effectively. These results were confirmed in the previous findings in the literature. Johnson (1990) interviewed 115 teachers and found that administrators focused on orderly performances of the evaluations procedures as opposed to the content of those evaluations. The main dissatisfaction of teachers with administrators as evaluators was what the teachers saw as a basic lack of competence on the part of administrators to evaluate subject matter (Johnson, 1990). Henniger (2002) stated that the nature of the observation itself is very different for those who have

experience in a particular subject. Observers who have been formally trained in a given skill, for example, often respond differently to observations of the performance of that skill than those who have not received formal training (Henniger, 2000, Stronge, 2007).

Fiona's comments confirmed the findings in the previous literature:

It (the teacher observation form) doesn't break down content at all. Does she know her content? So if I say yes, I know my content really well. No one is the wiser. And they come in and sit and watch—they would say, well, she looks like she knows what she is talking about. There is no one sitting there who would say, hmmm, that's not what I learned (about theatre). Because they haven't. It's very generic.

With this being an area of concern for most of the theatre teachers, it is reasonable to ask what areas that administrators focused on in terms of evaluations. Peterson (1984) identified the current common practice of “discrepancy” in which teacher quality is recognized by differences between an a priori ideal—a list of some behaviors, characteristics, duties, attitudes, outcomes, preparation, and/or experiences—and evidence about the actual teacher under review (Peterson, 2000, p. 40). Thus a standard of good teaching is defined and all teachers are compared to it. Those teachers most closely corresponding to the ideal are considered to be of the highest quality. In this study, administrators were not in consensus in terms of what aspects of teaching they were seeking as ideal. When administrators were asked what they looked for in terms of a good evaluation, the responses were mixed. Responses included a range of topics from student engagement to rapport with students to time on task. In addition, theatre arts teachers who participated in the study did not feel that what they did in the classroom was



seen by administrators as having the positive qualities found on such lists. Emily said, “...if they don’t understand your discipline. If you are under the unfortunate circumstance of having an administrator that doesn’t understand the value or see the value of your discipline then you are in trouble.”

Conversely, all eight administrators were in agreement as to what constituted a poor teacher performance: class management. As class management was the biggest red flag for all eight administrators, it is not surprising to find that all eight theatre teachers were most concerned about their theatre classes being perceived as being seen as having problems in class management. All eight theatre arts teachers described their classes as being an active engaged environment where physical activity and “controlled chaos” was the norm. However, many of the theatre teachers were concerned that in particular a theatre classroom environment would be perceived as being chaotic without control or without an educational goal. Alexa described her classroom as, “controlled chaos...which is a wonderful environment for learning.” Bard commented:

There are many times when they walk into my classroom when it looks like chaos. And, I’m usually walking around—they want to see the teachers involved...And sometimes they’ll walk up to me and I’ll say, hey, what’s going on? And I’ll tell them, we’re in the middle of group work right now...they’re working on a scene that they are creating or writing—they’re working on lighting.

Seven of the eight theatre arts teachers, including Fiona, commented on “chaos” as well:

But then there’s one that just says “managing student behavior” well, I’m sure to the naked eye, or to anyone walking in to my classroom, half the time it’s going to look chaos—but it’s very controlled chaos, maybe it’s improvisation, maybe

we're doing a warm-up and it's going to look like chaos but it's not. So that could very easily somebody could say it's out of control, she has no idea what she is doing.

But only three of the eight administrators recognized this as a concern. Erica remarked:

A lot of fine arts are controlled chaos and you need to understand that going in that it's not going to be a traditional classroom. I think as long as the teacher is aware of what their objectives are and what the students are supposed to be doing and that they are on-task and that they have a certain goal in mind. And that the teacher remained engaged with them, obviously in that type of a class it's not going to be engaged with every kid all, the entire class, but for them to engage as they go around because that is a very atmosphere than a traditional setting.

Though Erica recognized "chaos" as a concern, it should also be pointed out that she had a background in music and was participating in one of Emily's theatrical performances which could be construed as a conflict of interest in terms of teacher performance evaluation. Of the propriety standards, conflict of interest appears as the last strand definition. In the case of Emily and Erica, a conflict of interest may have been an issue. Erica, who was responsible for evaluating Emily's teaching, commented:

I'm a music person. I have an interest because I was in band and I did the musicals and all of that stuff, too. So it's neat for me, as an administrator, and I've told my fine arts teachers, that it's always so nice to see them out of a traditional classroom and to see them perform differently in a different type of classroom so it's a different type of mind set that you have to get. I find myself

kind of sitting back sometimes observing more in those classes because you can really get a different feel for things.

Both theatre arts and teachers revealed interactions that could have been construed as conflict of interest and therefore could present a problem in the teacher performance evaluation process. Emily described a situation that impacted her:

Our new principal was a former band director and he tries to make sure that people don't think that he favors the arts...there are a couple of other teachers in the program who feel that it impacts them. He is being very cautious so that people don't see him favoring one department...or the arts.

This study found that interactions with evaluatees, balanced evaluations, and conflict of interest were all problematic areas for the participants. In addition, the evaluation process revealed more weaknesses than strengths for both theatre arts teachers and administrators in these areas.

*Question 3: How do theatre teachers and administrators perceive the quality of evaluation in terms of utility standards?*

The Utility Standards are intended to guide evaluations so that they will be informative, timely, and influential. In terms of how theatre teachers and administrators perceive the quality of evaluation in terms of utility standards, the findings were mixed based on the issue. The utility standards include constructive orientation, evaluator qualifications, explicit criteria, functional reporting, and finally, professional development. Some of these areas have a slight overlap in the interview questions (See Chapter Three, Tables 7: Research Questions Aligned with Interview Questions and Follow-Up Interview Questions; and Table 8: Alignment of Interview Questions to Joint

Committee Standards). Those areas of overlap reveal more than one question listed in the table (See Table 8: Alignment of Interview Questions to Joint Committee Standards).

*Constructive Orientation.* As discussed in the literature, evaluation should be used as a way to influence the performance of an individual teacher within their discipline (subject) (Natriello, 1990). The goal is to improve performance that is already within a range of acceptable for holders of that position. Peterson (2000) described this aspect of performance improvement as being the most discussed purpose of teacher evaluation; the supposition is that feedback, with specific praise and criticism, helps professionals self-regulate. However, in this study, the majority of theatre arts teachers perceived the impact of their teacher performance evaluation to have an impact on their self-esteem as opposed to helping them self-regulate their teaching strategies. Five of the eight teachers reported that it either boosted their self-esteem or, in the case of a poor evaluation, damaged their psyche; two other theatre teachers reported that it had “little to no” effect at all on their teaching. For only one teacher, the impact of the evaluation gave him pause to reflect upon his classroom management skills. Regarding the impact of his evaluation, Clay responded:

That’s a good question. It helps me with classroom management, but she’s a music teacher so when I get heavy into theatre history and things like that, that’s stuff that she doesn’t understand. So content-wise it’s not as useful, it’s just the nuts and bolts of teaching that I find useful.

However, Bard and several other teachers were discouraged by their evaluations. Bard commented on the issue:

I think it's a good thing, for a lot of people, but for me--I know that a lot of the weaknesses that they put down for me I'm going to get. They are going to put down "professional dress" because many times I will just come in wearing slacks and a polo shirt and I won't have a tie on because either I'm painting that day or I'm doing something. They constantly want you in a tie the whole time.

Yeah, it has an impact on my psyche. It's a drag. It's a constant uphill battle.

Bard went on to say that he served as the department chair for the fine arts and that he worked hard, bringing his school to an award-winning status in Virginia High School League competitions but that the evaluations did not reflect those facts. That the teacher evaluation process damaged the psyche of a theatre arts teacher without giving that teacher the proper tools in order to grow does not improve the theatre teacher's teaching ability. In these cases and as reflected in the previous literature, the evaluation systems may have actually hindered a creative teacher's risk-taking and self-reflecting behaviors (Johnson, 1990), ingredients considered critical to the creative world of fine and performing arts instruction.

*Evaluator Qualifications and Functional Reporting.* Training to learn or to understand the teacher performance evaluation system was extremely limited in almost every case. Half (four) of the theatre arts teachers said that they received no training at all and that for many of them, the first time that they encountered the evaluation process was during a pre-conference with their administrator before their first teacher observation. Two administrators received no training. One administrator commented that her program was new but that she still had not received any training. Two administrators had learned scripting or narrative through district training. Two administrators learned

peer-coaching techniques as teachers and had applied that training to their current positions as administrators. One administrator, Catherine, who created her own evaluation system for use in the school of the performing arts, had this to say:

At Brigadoon University, I received wonderful training and in several classes and then I've worked with an assistant principal, at Wellpoint County, when I became department chairman at the Center of the Arts and she and I worked one or two together before I felt really comfortable doing that on my own. And then I developed my own style.

Because Catherine had developed her own evaluation system, she did not receive any formal training to implement the evaluation system from the district in which she worked. And though she was confident that she had created an evaluation form that would serve her theatre teacher's purposes, she was caught off-guard when asked: How does your evaluation process differentiate between the job performance of teachers with unrelated job descriptions, such as classroom teachers and theatre teachers? Catherine responded:

I'm not exactly sure...I've never done a formal observation on an unrelated position than the arts. I've walked through a lot of classrooms and I can't comment on content, because I don't know content, but I can comment on classroom management because I know when it's working. I recognize it.

Catherine could not verbalize whether or not her self-created evaluation system was working. Tucker (1997) argued that she would not know whether or not it was working and described this phenomenon or "the crux of the problem" as being principal's inflated self-ratings of their understanding of teacher evaluation (Tucker, 1997, p. 104).

Without proper training, administrators and teachers are left on their own to determine how the evaluation system should work which presents problems, even in cases where administrators create their own evaluation process.

*Explicit Criteria.* In terms of explicit criteria, this study found that not one evaluation system differentiated for teachers of varying disciplines. These results confirm the previous literature findings. Good and Mulryan (1990) stated that a majority of commonly used evaluation instruments failed to recognize the multidimensional nature of theatre arts teaching practices and school contexts. Travers stated that if a school can justify evaluating all teachers through identical procedures, then the school is probably devoid of innovations (p. 22). Eight out of eight theatre arts teachers and eight out of eight administrators in this study confirmed these previous literature findings.

*Professional Development.* One of the purposes of teacher performance evaluation is to influence the performance of an individual teacher within their discipline (subject) (Natriello, 1990). The goal is to improve performance that is already within a range of acceptable for holders of that position. However, in most every case, theatre arts teachers and administrators claimed that there were no links between evaluation data and planned staff development. In two cases, administrators described the process of planned staff development as being driving by student test scores. In another case, one pair described it as being exceptionally problematic for their district. Heather described it as the district's "sore spot" and Hannah said, "It's a weakness in this county...and it's huge."

*Question 4: How do theatre teachers and administrators perceive the quality of evaluation in terms of feasibility standards?*

The Feasibility Standards are intended to guide personnel evaluation systems to ensure ease of implementation, efficiency in use of time and resources, adequacy of funding, and viability from a political standpoint (Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 2007). In terms of how administrators perceived the quality of evaluation in terms of the feasibility standards the responses were similar. Theatre arts teachers questions were not aligned with this standard. Some of these areas have a slight overlap in the interview questions (see Chapter Three).

Administrators did not believe that the evaluation systems were meaningful or that they were a priority for the school system and did not have adequate support in professional growth. In half the cases, what was determined important for teacher growth for all teachers as a whole was determined by the district. This did not take into consideration the needs of theatre arts teachers. In only two cases, opportunities for professional growth were created by the teachers' personal goals. In one case (Catherine), the evaluation process did not promote professional growth at all. Instead, Catherine said, "But what happens is they help each other and it's not initiated from me. Like I said, we are developing a collegial atmosphere there and we help each other."

Performance appraisals affect the decisions that organizational leaders make about the selection, placement, retention, recognition, rewards, and professional growth of employees (Danielson & McGreal, 2000; Peterson, 2000; Stronge, 2006). A teacher performance assessment and evaluation system should be a balanced relationship between school- or district-wide goals and individual teacher professional growth and improvement (Stronge, 2006). In these cases, professional growth was not an end-goal



for the evaluation system and the evaluation systems failed to provide opportunities for theatre arts teachers.

*Question 5: How do theatre teachers and administrators perceive the quality of evaluation in terms of accuracy standards?*

The Accuracy Standards determine whether an evaluation produces sound information. Personnel evaluations must be technically adequate and as complete as possible to allow sound judgments and decisions to be made. The evaluation methodology should be appropriate for the purpose of the evaluation and the evaluatees being evaluated and the context in which they work (Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 2007). The accuracy standards include validity orientation, defined expectations, analysis of content, documented purposes and procedures, defensible information (not covered in this study), reliable information (not covered in this study), systematic data control, bias, analysis of information, justified conclusions (not covered in this study) and metaevaluation (not covered in this study). In terms of how theatre teachers and administrators perceive the quality of evaluation in terms of propriety standards, the findings were mixed based on the issue.

*Validity orientation and defined expectations.* This issue was addressed in terms of how accurately theatre teachers believed their current evaluation system addressed their job performance. In seven out of the eight teachers the response was negative. Neither theatre arts teachers nor their administrators believed that the current evaluation systems were accurate. Six out of eight theatre teachers saw the evaluation process as inaccurate. One theatre arts teacher had a negative response but was uncertain as to whether or not it was accurate. Seven out of the eight administrators believed that the

evaluation systems were not accurate. Two administrators thought that the process was fair if final performances or other outside responsibilities beyond classroom observation were included in the evaluation. In those two cases, the administrators said that they included these outside activities in their summative reports but that the teacher observation form did not have a place specifically for theatre performances. Instead, they added comments to the summative evaluation to remark upon added responsibilities that the theatre teacher assumed.

These results confirm previous findings in the literature regarding the artificial nature of observation as a concern because it fails to capture the nature of what occurs both inside and outside of the classroom (Stronge & Tucker, 2003). As a result, the opportunity for evaluation through what is being learned and accomplished in a setting such as a rehearsal or performance is lost. Part of teaching--and by extension student learning--in the arts is the process of rehearsal and performance. Gardner (2004) stated that:

...focusing on performance immediately marks the an important shift (in learning): instead of mastering content, one thinks about the reasons *why* a particular content is being taught and how best to display one's comprehensions of that content in a publicly accessible way. (p.161)

Observation tends to measure specific teaching processes; however, it does not reflect teaching/performance results (Stronge & Tucker, 2003). Lazarus (2004) noted that many theatre arts teachers make conscious connections between the work in their theatre classes and their production (i.e., their after-school theatre programs). While all of the teachers produce plays, some teachers had production classes solely for making

those connections. Some had sequential classes such as Theatre I, II, and III, as well as a separate production class. Whatever the individual configuration of production and classes, these teachers recognized that they were always teaching (Lazarus, 2004). To unify their programs, they incorporate improvisation and acting exercises, research, design, theatre technology, audition techniques, stage management, rehearsal etiquette, and work with text, voice, and movement into classes *and* after school rehearsals (Lazarus, 2004).

*Analysis of Content, Documented Purposes and Procedures, and Systematic Data Control.* This study found that theatre arts teachers and administrators are safeguarded against misuse of evaluation information within their respective districts. In all but one case, theatre teachers reported that conferences were held behind closed doors and evaluations were signed and placed in personnel files. Though procedures were handled properly in most cases, it was the way in which they were held that was a source of frustration for most of the theatre arts teachers. Seven of the eight teachers said that the standard practice was to take part in a post-conference several days to several weeks after the conclusion of a classroom observation. Though a formal conference was the gold standard, several teachers commented that time was an element of consideration.

This pattern of lack of time necessary for the evaluation process was consistent in all eight theatre teachers and was reinforced by half of the administrators. It appeared in the description of how many of the evaluation procedures were handled, including the results in which employee appraisals were communicated. These results are confirmed in the findings of the literature regarding lack of time and the importance of sound evaluation. A conceptually sound and properly implemented evaluation system for

teachers is an essential component for an effective school and by extension for the success student achievement (Stronge, 2006). Without time to discuss the importance of the results of an evaluation, theatre teachers concluded that the evaluation process was worthless. Gabrielle commented that the meetings were rushed and therefore not taken seriously, “Uh, I guess we could say it was scheduled. It was can you see me this afternoon, after school and it was yeah, what time?” Lortie (1975) described teaching as a profession remarkably barren of feedback that indicates quality and authoritative reassurance.

*Bias.* This study found that bias within the evaluation process was a problem for theatre teachers and administrators. Seven of the eight theatre arts teachers said that teacher performance evaluation in their districts did not ensure objectivity; theatre arts teachers stated that performance evaluations were subjective based on the person evaluating them. This theme of bias was evident in statements the participants made. Emily said:

Rapport could be construed as subjective if you don't get along with that administrator, if they don't understand your discipline. If you are under the unfortunate circumstance of having an administrator that doesn't understand the value or see the value of your discipline then you are in trouble.

Other teachers had similar responses. Clay commented on the process as one based on trust in the interactions with administrators, “I don't know. It's a trust thing, I guess. I mean you have to trust that the person who is going to you evaluate you to be objective.”

But other teachers felt that regardless of the interactions that they had with administrators that the evaluation process was subjective and problematic. Fiona said:

It's very subjective, I would say...because going back to domain one—do I know my content. Do you really know if I know my content--by whose standards? There are all these little blanks, there are some that are very cut and dry—like SOLs on the board, they are either there or they are not. That's objective. But then there's one that just says “managing student behavior” well, I'm sure to the naked eye, or to anyone walking in to my classroom, half the time it's going to look chaos—but it's very controlled chaos, maybe it's improvisation, maybe we're doing a warm-up and it's going to look like chaos but it's not. So that could very easily somebody could say it's out of control, she has no idea what she is doing. Then there is one here that says showing professionalism—well, again, what does that mean?

The response from Fiona and other theatre teachers who took part in this study confirms previous findings in the literature. A problem identified by teachers in the Johnson (1990) study was the rating forms, which left teachers confused when administrators evaluated items such as “professional demeanor” without the use of descriptions or further explanation (p. 268). Regardless of the assessments of outside observers and evaluation experts about the factors that enable or disable effective evaluation, the beliefs and attitudes of principals themselves about these factors as well as their beliefs about their own skills and abilities are likely to impact substantially the effective implementation of evaluation policies (Painter, 2000). Lastly, reliance on administrators as the central

evaluator leads to sociological domination, which in turn detracts from teacher functioning and morale (Peterson, 2000).

### *Implications for Educational Policy and Practice*

This study focused on evaluation practices currently in use as seen through the practices of administrators and theatre arts teachers that they evaluate and compared those practices using the Joint Committee Standards for Evaluation as a framework. Through this study, it was revealed that though theatre arts teachers and administrators are committed to current evaluation practices in hopes that they will provide professional guidance, evaluation practices fail on many levels.

The results of this study are particularly salient to educators and administrators who are charged with the responsibility of maintaining theatre arts programming in their schools. The primary audience for this study includes professors in academe, educational administrators, and teachers who specialize in theatre arts. In triangulating the research findings from case studies and cross-case analysis, this study not only provides evidence to support existing research but also provides important findings on current assessment practices and issues for educators in Virginia to consider in evaluating theatre arts teachers. In general, administrators are in need of more accurate and reliable measures of teacher performance evaluation in order to ensure that the highest possible standards of achievement are met in the classroom, regardless of subject matter or discipline, but specifically for those who teach theatre arts in this study (Peterson, 2000; Stronge, 1997). The findings of this study combined with the previous findings in the literature (Peterson, 2000; Danielson & McGreal, 2000, Stronge, 1997) express a need for current evaluation models to change.

It would appear that evaluating a performing arts teacher becomes much more effective if that teacher were evaluated through the eyes of an administrator who has been formally trained in the (performing) arts. Of course, this is not possible in most cases, but, as discussed in the literature (Henniger, 2002) the complete absence of having any arts background makes evaluation next to impossible. The views of the participants of this study see this same need as well. The findings of this study are congruent with the literature findings regarding the problems of teacher performance evaluation while aiming a spotlight on specific areas where theatre arts teachers are the focus.

It is true that all teaching environments share important characteristics, and that a thoughtful and well-trained observer can recognize these characteristics (or their absence) in a variety of settings (Stronge, 1997). But knowledge of content, of content-related pedagogy, and the approaches to learning displayed by students at different developmental levels are highly relevant to teaching. Theatre arts teachers may well be more knowledgeable in these matters than the administrator who evaluates their performance; this fact undermines the evaluation process, contributing to the perception that it has little value (Danielson & McGreal, 2000).

In addition, this study found that bias or subjectivity in the evaluation process undermines the process when the tools used are not specific for subject matter and training in minimal in terms of how those tools should be used in the evaluation process. In this study, most theatre teachers and administrators agreed that bias or subjectivity was evident in the evaluation process which reinforces a subordinate relationship. The results of this study confirms the previous findings in the literature regarding top-down communication and the lack of collegiality within administrators/theatre arts teacher

relationship that goes beyond the evaluation of the subject matter that they teach.

Traditional assessments appear to reinforce superior-subordinate managerial relationships in which the evaluator stands outside the process and makes judgments about the teacher (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Peterson, 2000). A manager-oriented evaluation system affords teachers little voice in the analysis of their own practice. In addition, such a system may serve to circumscribe the construction of knowledge and to foster a monologue instead of a dialogue in the evaluation process. Danielson and McGreal (2000) described evaluation systems as characterized by top-down communication, in which the only evidence of teacher performance is that collected by an administrator during classroom observation which can lead to one sided communication as well as a subordinate relationship during the process.

Tucker, Stronge and Gareis (2002) noted in their work regarding portfolios as evaluation instruments that the complexity of professional roles in today's schools requires a performance evaluation that reflects that complexity (p. 56). These comments go beyond portfolios as evaluation instruments and can be applied to all evaluation instruments. Furthermore, this is especially true for teachers of theatre arts. As stated by Heather, "...and the formal evaluation with observations, tools, and checklists does nothing to evaluate what I do as a director, producer, confessor, nursemaid and all of that..." The performing arts are complex and evaluation tools should capture that complexity so that theatre arts teachers can grow professionally and excel as teachers in the classroom and beyond.



*Recommendations for Further Research*

The evaluation process for theatre arts teachers deserves a more intensive overview, and outdated procedures and processes need to be reconsidered. The research is clear: the arts are important to this nation's children (Fowler, 1994, Eisner, 2005). Models for teaching the performing arts exist; however, there are no models for evaluating those who teach the performing arts. The evaluation of performing arts educators is in need of reconsideration. Stronge and Tucker (2003) noted that teacher performance evaluation systems that do not include teacher responsibilities outside the classroom are not balanced. Future research should include reviewing evaluation models that incorporate the responsibilities theatre arts teachers have beyond the classroom walls. In addition, further research could include the development of more inclusive models for evaluating theatre arts teachers, models that recognize the collaborative efforts of community and considers performance as a necessary component of evaluation.

There are many indications and implications that traditional methods of evaluation are not serving teachers of theatre and perhaps other subject-specific teachers adequately. An additional area of interest for further study would be the investigation of the evaluation across all disciplines of the arts. If theatre arts evaluation is problematic then it would stand to reason that all arts evaluation, including music and the visual arts, is in need of review and revision as well.

Future researchers should consider expanding the findings of this study to include teachers of other subject matters. Would a study designed to examine the practices and perceptions of current evaluation models applied to teachers of other subjects, such as math, science and foreign languages, yield similar results? What would similar studies

reveal regarding those teachers who, like theatre arts teachers, are singletons or specialty teachers in their schools (such as band teachers, art teachers and/or chorus teachers)? These questions should be considered for future studies regarding teacher performance evaluation.

Future research also should consider the possibility that theatre arts teachers appear to be natural subjects for evolving models for teacher evaluation due to the extensive nature of student interaction, and the successful track record for students of varying ability levels to reach high performance outcomes in public performances, as well as state, national and international festivals and competitions. Evaluation models that place performance final production over process are in need of reconsideration and further study.

And finally, teacher performance evaluation of theatre arts teachers offers excellent opportunities for longitudinal studies since students at every level often have the same theatre arts teachers from the beginning of their high school career until they graduate. These studies could take the form of case studies that follow students through their years with a single teacher.

### *Conclusion*

America's students deserve the best education that educators can give them; society deserves well-educated students as contributing members to meet the needs of an ever-changing and complex world. An education in the arts benefits both its students and society (Consortium of National Arts Education Association, 1994). In particular, it benefits the student because it helps to cultivate the whole child, gradually building many

kinds of literacy while developing intuition, reasoning, imagination, and dexterity through unique forms of expression and communication.

An education in the arts also benefits society because students of the arts are given powerful tools for understanding human experiences, both past and present, learning to adapt to and respect others' ways of thinking, working and expressing themselves; make decisions in situations in which there are no standard answers; analyze nonverbal communication; and make informed judgments about cultural products and issues (Consortium of National Arts Education Association, 1994).

Educators must provide tools for teachers so that they can reflect, respond and grow professionally in order to provide students with the best arts education possible. By providing teachers in theatre proper and effective evaluation tools, theatre arts teachers can educate students to meet the needs of a changing world.

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## Appendices

## Appendix A

*Researcher as Instrument*

In the arts, the gifted and talented or unique are not unique at all. Gifted and talented students are often the core of what often comprises “the arts” and they are said to be creative. Ornstein and Hunkins (2004), in their book *Curriculum: Foundations, Principles, and Issues*, write:

There are many types of creativity—artistic, musical, scientific, manual, and so on—yet we tend to talk about creativity as an all-encompassing term. Creative students are often puzzling to teachers. They are difficult to characterize; their novel answers frequently seem threatening to teachers, and their behavior often deviates from what is considered “normal”. Sometimes, teachers discourage creativity and punish creative students (p. 121).

This notion of the “creative” student and by extension, the teacher who teaches a creative subject to that student, is one that I have been confronted with for my entire professional career. Even as a doctoral student at William and Mary, I have seen myself characterized by others as a “creative artist” which has meant having to explain myself when challenged as to my very existence in the program. There is a terrible misconception that the creative arts are fluff; that they are “light” with little work required. Just being diverse in this way makes me aware of the challenges that anyone in my position faces. This is unique position is one that I have faced before as an educator of theatre.

In most schools, there is only one theatre teacher; additionally, most schools have only one person who teaches (and therefore is also the only representative of) any performing arts discipline—one band teacher, one vocal teacher, one theatre teacher, one (if any) dance teacher. I have a BFA in theatre education and an MFA in theatre direction and have taught high school and college theatre as well as public speaking. I have enjoyed both very much; however, I have had difficulty understanding the perspective of some of my former administrators with whom I have worked. I believe that most administrators have trouble understanding performing arts teachers as well. It could be because we are teaching unique students, because we teach a unique discipline, or because we have requirements and needs that many teachers (who do not teach in the performing/fine arts) do not have.

Ornstein and Hunkins (2004) point out that curriculum specialists tend to ignore gifted and creative in their curriculum plans (subject matter or course description, subject guides, and subject materials and activities) because creative students represent only a small proportion (about 2 to 5 percent, depending on the definition) of the school population (p. 121). I can attest to this in my own teachings experiences. I served on the writing committee of the Standards of Learning for the arts in Virginia. If I mentioned this fact in the course of conversation, nine times out of ten the response would be complete confusion and usually an admission from the person with whom I am conversing that they had no idea such standards existed in the arts. It is an unfortunate reflection of how the arts (and in particular, the fine and performing arts) are perceived.

My employment experiences at my last school before I was admitted to William and Mary proved to be the most offensive. A former administrator actually insisted that

my students were somehow given drugs or paid to rehearse. He could not understand why we spent so many hours preparing for a performance. He actually asked me, “Why do they want to spend so much time in the dark?” The “dark” in this case was a reference to the fact that the building had no windows or natural light, due to the nature of the building itself—a theatre! Never mind the fact that we were three-time state champions in the Virginia High School League One Act Play Festival Competition, AAA division, and that we were recognized by other “theatre schools” as being fiercely competitive and a group to beat. Today that former administrator handles building arrangements for the janitorial staff for the entire school district. That he works with buildings instead of people has nothing to do with his comments to me; quite the contrary, his comments are more representative than not of the attitudes towards fine arts teachers.

Not all administrators have such a dim view of the fine arts. Some understand the complexity of what it is we do. Ornstein and Hunkins (2004) bring up a brilliant point—and that is the agreement that creativity represents a quality of mind: it comprises both a cognitive and humanistic component in learning; although no one agrees on an exact mix, it is probably more cognitive than humanistic (p. 121). Yes! Administrators who want to move students into theatre classes because they aren’t doing well in other class are misguided. Oh, how I loathe the comment that “Johnny would be wonderful in your (my) theatre class because he ‘acts up’ in math/science/social studies all the time”. No! Theatre is not just about improvisation (although that is a fine skill). It is about discipline and exactly the opposite of what Johnny is doing. Hunkins and Ornstein (2004) state: the individual creates primarily because creating is self-satisfying and because the behavior or product is *self-actualizing* (p. 121). And that’s the big difference. Johnny is

acting up in math class because he is bored or just making life difficult because he can—  
*and that has nothing to do with self-actualization.*

Having been at that perfect moment when flow (a term coined by Csikszentmihalyi) is achieved during a performance or rehearsal, I can tell you that it transcends anything like cutting remarks made in a classroom conversation at the expense of someone else's time. There are both teachers and administrators who know this. And many of them are also aware of such things as studies concluding that fine arts students have higher SAT scores than their non-artistic peers. And they treat us accordingly.

These experiences are not unique to gifted and talented people or creative people, these flow experiences happen to people of other disciplines, too. There is a distinction between gifted and creative students. Frequently, educators lump creative children in with highly intelligent or gifted children, even though high intelligence and high creativity are not necessarily related; and there are many types of creative children (Ornstein and Hunkins, 2004). But because gifted and talented students are also referred to as creative (especially gifted and talented students specifically in the arts), I will use the terms interchangeably at times, referring to gifted, talented and creative as one all encompassing category: gifted and talented. I do see a common thread that runs through all of the ways these students are categorized, whether they are gifted, talented, and creative or of high intelligence. These are the types of students that are drawn to the arts; these students are not the students who have nothing better to do with their time, are lazy, dreamers, odd, or just “artsy” as some administrators often believe. That is one of the biggest misconceptions that people have regarding the arts. That anyone can be an artist, that it takes no skill, that art is valueless. Nothing could be further from the truth. Most

people confuse talent with craft. Theatre requires craft; and while some talent (that indefinable quality) is involved, theatre as an art form requires the *skills* of a craftsman.

My experiences in the arts, and my experience with those who are ill-informed about the arts, translate to what I believe about administrators and teachers and those who live “outside” of the world of the performing arts (and by performing arts I mean any aspect of the performing arts: band, music, theatre, dance, performance art). I think that administrators do not understand what it is that we do and teach. So rather than attempting to understand the performing arts teachers, they have become frozen in their thinking and do not attempt to move forward to grasp a larger understanding of what we are about. I think their epistemology comes from the age-old “difficult” artist image, through stereotypes and lack of interaction in the field of the performing arts and performing artists. They see performing arts teachers as outsiders, hard to understand and even more difficult to work with due to behaviors that are unrecognizable to them. In addition, because there is no clear cut rubric in which to assess the lone performing arts teacher, administrators see the work (and it is work!) as fluff, easy, light and useless. After all, if we would just do “normal” things in our classes, if our students would sit in straight rows, if we could be pinned down to doing one thing at a time (or better yet, have our students do just one thing at a time—instead of in small groups all over the place), then a rubric for how to evaluate us could be formulated and used.

I think most administrators have some spirit of altruism in their hearts (after all, they are in the field of education!), but because they are human, they are unwilling to delve into their own prejudices and attitudes and be honest with themselves. Prejudice is an ugly and undesirable trait and most people would like to believe that they are more

evolved intellectually and spiritually than to have prejudices of any kind. They have seen “our type” too many times. Because of this I am unwilling to discover that performing arts teachers and administrators are quite happily coexisting somewhere in public-school-land. And perhaps I am unwilling to discover this because I do not believe it to be true. My experiences in education lead me to this perspective: it has simply not been the truth as I have encountered it over and over again in my former positions dealing with other performing arts teachers and administrators. I would like to think otherwise, but I really don’t believe it to be reality. Does this make me negative? I don’t believe it does; ultimately I would not have chosen this question for reflection and research if I did not believe that an emancipatory conclusion could be the result.

So what specific experiences have led me to this conclusion? I can recall experiences ranging from overhearing conversations of other performing arts teachers at conferences that reflect my beliefs and experiences. One of my final performances as a theatre teacher included a cast of close to seventy-five students in a full scale musical production of *The Wizard of Oz*. This show, complete with an orchestra made up of members of the Richmond Symphony Orchestra, required a seven-day-a-week rehearsal schedule. On top of this, I maintained all of my other duties as a teacher, a state representative for the International Thespian Society and as a national representative for an educational organization that promoted theatre in the public schools. One afternoon during my planning period, which also happened to be the last class period of the day, I changed from my more professional clothes into a pair of paint-stained jeans and a t-shirt to finish painting a set piece needed in rehearsal that afternoon. As I walked from the restroom to the auditorium, an administrator stopped me and asked me why I was dressed

in such an “unimpressive” way. I did not have any response; I was shocked. My reputation for being an award-winning English and theatre teacher did not seem to matter and part of me wondered if this administrator actually knew who I was. I actually wondered if he thought that maybe I was a substitute teacher.

As a teacher who was known to work from the minute the building opened to minute the building closed as well as every Saturday (the janitorial staff knew me by name and would often joke that I worked more hours than the entire teaching staff combined), I was known by my fellow teachers as being obsessive about being the best theatre teacher in every possible way. Admittedly, I wanted to have the biggest and best theatre program in the state; and I volunteered myself and my students for any opportunity that put me or my program on the map. I really wanted to believe that my goals for the school theatre program were the same goals held by the administration, but that never seemed to be the case. I worked tirelessly to increase the interest in the performing arts, brought community together with parents and students to quadruple the number of students signing up for theatre, quintuple the number of tickets sold at each performance and increase the number of shows presented in season, as well as win both regional and state VHSL theatre festivals (a feat never accomplished until I began teaching at this particular school) not one year, but three years in a row.

I started the first theatre boosters’ organization and by the time I completed my second year of teaching at this school, our booster club was as large as the booster club for football. Surely the administration would recognize what was happening and work along side of me to buy better (and working) equipment, improve the quality of the working space allotted to me and increase the number of classes offered to theatre

students so that they could continue beyond theatre I and II and be able to take theatre III and IV? This wasn't unrealistic---French and German students could go as high as French V and German IV. I soon found that I was not alone in my experiences as a theatre teacher.

As I networked with my colleagues at festivals and other venues, especially at the state and national level of competitions and conferences, I began to hear the same refrain over and over again. It wasn't just me whining about how unfair my life was—I was decrying a universal theatre teacher experience! What a liberating and disheartening moment all at same time!

Many of the complaints and experiences were the same. A common complaint I heard from my colleagues was that the space that was allotted to them to use as theatre space, also doubled as space for every other activity under the sun. When my program grew to incorporate six theatre classes, a waiting list of students (who could not get into those available classes), with an additional teacher being needed to take over the English classes that I could no longer teach (because I was teaching a full load of all theatre classes), the administration finally consulted me in how to use the auditorium space. No longer was I “last in line” behind the bus driver education films, the blood drives, and the football team pep meetings. All of these functions could be held in any large space (and all of these functions were later moved to other large spaces). But theatre needed to be rehearsed, presented and taught in the theatre. I could not teach students how to properly hang and focus lekos and fresnels without the actual instruments or the electrics in which to hang them. And, as an aside, when I finally left my position to pursue a degree at the College of William and Mary, I received calls for many months after my departure from



administrators who asked me how to turn and off equipment in the auditorium, such as the heat, the light board, and the water.

Another complaint that my colleagues voiced was that of the block schedule. When block scheduling was created, the idea that we could delve more deeply into our disciplines was a welcome concept. However, when it was soon learned that in block scheduling a student would only be allowed to take one elective a year, and the year went from September to January or from January to June in the four by four block schedule, it killed the continuity which is needed to hone the craft of acting, directing, designing and every other discipline which requires constant rehearsal, practice or attention to keep those skills fresh and alive. Just like the athlete who needs to train throughout the course of a year in order to participate in a sport or event that lasts only a short amount of time, the arts are no different.

Finally, my colleagues complained that they were overlooked as professionals. Some of my colleagues who taught theatre and English were just certified in English. I was unique in that I was actually certified to teach theatre, speech and English, and in fact, received my training and BFA in a conservatory program. This degree required an additional year to complete and very few colleges and universities offered this degree. So by the very nature of this design, inept and unqualified teachers in the performing arts were making their way into classrooms across the country. My closest colleagues (those who were also my fiercest competitors at festivals) went through the long and arduous task of completing a degree in theatre first and then returning to an undergraduate program for certification in English so that they would be employable. Or they had undergraduate degrees in English and later completed MFAs. But in most cases, English

teachers were hired and then learned that they also had to teach a couple of classes in theatre, a subject in which most of them had no training other than reading and dissecting plays as an English teacher.

The most talented of my colleagues were not valued for the degree that they completed in theatre, but instead for the tacked-on classes that allowed them to teach English. Because this is the case, there was an unspoken understanding amongst us as to who was truly “qualified”. There was almost an “us and them” unspoken feeling of contempt. There were those teachers who never had kept high numbers in their programs and taught theatre because “they had to teach it”. These were the teachers we loathed. They made the rest of us, those of us who had completed BFAs and MFAs and were theatre teachers first, and more often than not, also professional theatre people beyond the school yard, look bad. I suspect that administrators have had experiences with those teachers that we considered “unqualified”, and those experiences colored their feelings and expectations of what to expect from theatre teachers, just as they colored our expectations. How should an administrator evaluate a teacher who would admit that they did not have the skills or weren’t even certified or qualified to teach the subject that they were hired to teach? It seems to be an indication that the subject is not considered valuable enough to hire someone who is truly qualified to teach it.

Despite all of this, I don’t think the outlook for performing arts teachers and administrators is a bleak one. I do hope that this research study will be one of emancipatory use. My biggest hope for this project would be that administrators recognize performing arts teachers as partners in the education process. But will this

happen? I don't believe it will if people are not honest with themselves and if they don't look at the personal constructs (i.e., attitudes, beliefs and values) in which they operate.

It is not because I don't believe that administrators want the best for their teachers. Quite the contrary, I do. But I believe that many of them have been operating under an old paradigm that is so deep to their core that their personal constructs are perhaps unconscious; they are truly unaware of how they operate or have not spent a lot of time thinking about it.

Changes, if they are to come, will come slowly. It seems that education is slow to incorporate change, even if it is on the human level and does not require change in the actual structure of the building or the technology inside. If you walk into any classroom what will you find? You will most likely find a student with an iPod or a cell phone (if they are allowed in the classroom) sitting in front of a chalkboard. Talk about a juxtaposition. The latest meets the archaic. So in that respect, ideas about teaching and teaching itself (and by extension, teachers and administrators) mirror the physical manifestation of education. It seems that schools are stuck in a modern perspective as well as the operation of the people within that school building. I think that schools are stuck somewhere between perennial values and (if they are lucky) essentialism.

Education, however, needs to be reframed to incorporate a reconstructionist approach for creative students and those who teach them to survive and thrive. In the very least, allow for students to have a post-modern perspective in the curriculum. Why? Because a creative student needs to be able to create his/her own learning goals. Creative students need an entirely new perspective that is not explored in public education.

Allowing these students to take the lead and help to create and reach goals that may not

be part of the general curriculum is necessary. I suspect that some administrators would not embrace these ideas, not because it would mean too much work (although it would), but because of deep-seated unexplored fear of doing something totally radical and how it might effect the status quo (and the stakeholders beyond the school walls). Additionally, this fear might be so deeply rooted that the administrator is unaware of its very existence. Administrators and school systems are slow to incorporate change and this is something important to consider when conducting research in hopes of an emancipatory ending.

I believe in order for all students to get the most out of their public school opportunities that these changes are necessary, especially for the creative student to benefit. So while I frame this as an experience from a teacher's perspective, I am fully aware of who will benefit from any and all changes: the student.

I also believe that change from the inside out (which sometimes is many times more difficult than change from the outside in) is our responsibility as teachers and administrators, and ours alone. And because of this, we do not have to wait for the rest of the public school system to update the outdated chalkboards in order for us to be making the right connections with each other and our students. But I will hope that the results of this study, no matter what they may be, will help to uncover and understand all of the pitfalls that theatre teachers experience in the evaluation process.

The research from this point forward for me will undoubtedly mean wrestling with my own beliefs about the evaluation process. But it will be my responsibility to be cognizant of these issues as I work through the process.

Appendix B

Consent Form:

A Critical Examination of Practices and Perceptions of  
Current Performance Evaluation Models for Theatre Arts Teachers in Virginia

I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree to participate in a study regarding perceptions of educational evaluation. The purpose of this study is to gather and understand experiences regarding current evaluation practices in various school divisions in Virginia.

As a participant, I understand that I will be interviewed at least once and asked to evaluate the appropriateness of the skills and standards developed during the study. I understand that I will have the opportunity to review the information I have provided prior to publication.

I have been informed that I will be identified by an alias that will allow the researcher to determine my identity. At the conclusion of this study, the key that relates my name to the alias will be destroyed. Under this condition, I agree that any information obtained from this research may be used in any way thought best for publication or education. I understand that I will be provided with a copy of the final publication.

I understand that there is no personal risk or discomfort directly involved with this research and that participation is voluntary. I am free to withdraw my consent and discontinue participation in this study at any time. If I have any questions or problems that arise in connection with my participation in this study, I should contact the project advisor, Dr. James Stronge, at 757-221-2339 or [jhstro@wm.edu](mailto:jhstro@wm.edu). Participants may report any dissatisfaction with the study to the Chair of the Human Subjects Committee, Dr. Michael Deschenes, at the College of William and Mary at 757-221-2778 or [mrdres@wm.edu](mailto:mrdres@wm.edu).

My signature below signifies that I am at least 18 years of age and that I have received a copy of this consent form.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant/Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Investigator/Date

THIS PROJECT EDIRC-2008-03-28-5282-sxwill WAS FOUND TO COMPLY WITH APPROPRIATE ETHICAL STANDARDS AND WAS EXEMPTED FROM THE NEED FOR FORMAL REVIEW BY THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY

PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS COMMITTEE (Phone 757-221-3966) ON  
2008-04-14 AND EXPIRES ON 2009-04-14.

## Appendix C

## Letter to Participants



The College Of  
**WILLIAM & MARY**

School of Education  
Post Office Box 8795  
Williamsburg, Virginia 23187-8795  
e-mail [jhstro@facstaff.wm.edu](mailto:jhstro@facstaff.wm.edu)

James H. Stronge  
Heritage Professor  
757/221-2339  
Fax: 757/221-2988

Dear NAME/Theatre Teacher,

I am writing to you to request your expertise in a doctoral study being conducted via the College of William and Mary, in Williamsburg, Virginia. My name is Shelley Nowacek and I am writing a doctoral dissertation on evaluation instruments for theatre teachers. My committee chair is Dr. James Stronge.

I would like an opportunity to interview you regarding your teacher evaluation system. *The most important requirement for participation is that you are evaluated as a theatre teacher as opposed to an English teacher or teacher of any other subject area.* My hope is that I will capture the perceptions of theatre teachers regarding the accuracy of the evaluation instruments currently used in their schools.

I would greatly appreciate your participation in this study. I understand how incredibly busy you are and how valuable your time is and I would be more than happy to work around your schedule. Please consider participating in this important study regarding the effectiveness of teacher evaluation tools in Virginia.

Please contact me via email to let me know if you would be willing to participate. Please note that the results of this study are completely anonymous and your name and title will not be used in the final results of the study. Instead you will appear as Dr./Mrs./Ms./Mr. Brown/White/Green, etc., teacher, theatre educator, etc., in a large/medium/small rural/suburban/urban school in Virginia. Participation is completely voluntary.

I can be reached at [sxwill@wm.edu](mailto:sxwill@wm.edu) or [s32602@yahoo.com](mailto:s32602@yahoo.com) or at home at (757) 301-9134. Thank you so much in advance for your time and I look forward to hearing from you. I will be sending a small gesture of appreciation in the mail following this letter, along with a consent form. My hope is that you will share your expertise for others to gain insight on the importance of teacher evaluation.

Sincerely,

Shelley L. Nowacek

BFA Theatre Education, VCU 1989

MFA Theatre Directing, VCU 1995

The College of William and Mary

Doctoral Candidate; Education: Policy, Planning and Leadership



Appendix D



The College Of  
**WILLIAM & MARY**

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School of Education  
Post Office Box 8795  
Williamsburg, Virginia 23187-8795  
e-mail [jhstro@facstaff.wm.edu](mailto:jhstro@facstaff.wm.edu)

James H. Stronge  
Heritage Professor  
757/221-2339  
Fax: 757/221-2988

Dear Theatre Teacher,

I recently wrote to ask you to participate in a doctoral study regarding evaluation instruments for administrators and teachers. I really appreciate that you have chosen to participate in this study. Enclosed is a consent form for the study. In order to be a participant, simply sign and return the consent form in the self-addressed-stamped-envelope.

I will contact you via email to follow up with you. Thank you in advance for your expertise; I realize that time is a valuable commodity so I am happy to interview you at a time that is convenient to your schedule.

Thank you very much for your time and I look forward to talking with you.

Sincerely,

Shelley L. Nowacek  
The College of William and Mary  
Doctoral candidate; Education: Policy, Planning and Leadership

## Appendix E



The College Of  
**WILLIAM & MARY**

School of Education  
Post Office Box 8795  
Williamsburg, Virginia 23187-8795  
e-mail [jhstro@facstaff.wm.edu](mailto:jhstro@facstaff.wm.edu)

James H. Stronge  
Heritage Professor  
757/221-2339  
Fax: 757/221-2988

Dear (NAME/administrator),

I am writing to you to request your expertise in a doctoral study being conducted via the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia. My name is Shelley Nowacek and I am writing a doctoral dissertation regarding evaluation instruments for fine arts teachers. My committee chair is Dr. James Stronge. The dissertation is entitled A Critical Examination of Practices and Perceptions of Current Performance Evaluation Models for Theatre Arts Teachers in Virginia; I'm asking for your participation and expertise as an administrator/department chair/head.

I would like to interview you to ask you questions regarding your evaluation system and its effectiveness in evaluating your fine art/s instructors. Also, note that all participation is completely voluntary.

I would greatly appreciate your participation in this study. I understand how incredibly busy you are and how valuable your time is and I would be more than happy to interview you at your convenience. Please consider participating in this important study regarding the effectiveness of teacher evaluation tools in Virginia.

Please contact me via email to let me know if you would be willing to participate. Please note that the results of this study are completely anonymous and your name and title will not be used in the final results of the study. Instead you will appear as Dr./Mrs./Ms./Mr. Brown/White/Green, etc., a principal/assistant principal/department chair, etc., in a large/medium/small rural/suburban/urban school in Virginia.

I can be reached at [sxwill@wm.edu](mailto:sxwill@wm.edu) or [s32602@yahoo.com](mailto:s32602@yahoo.com) or at home at (757) 301-9134. Thank you so much in advance for your time and I look forward to hearing from you. I will be sending a small gesture of appreciation in the mail following this letter, along with a consent form. My hope is that you will share your expertise for others to gain insight on the importance of teacher evaluation.

Sincerely,

Shelley L. Nowacek

The College of William and Mary  
Doctoral candidate; Education: Policy, Planning and Leadership

## Appendix F

## Reflexive Journal Entry.

I decided that the best way to capture all of the communication was to create a Table of Participants and mark the dates as time progressed. This way I can make a note as to whom I've contacted. No use sending two Starbucks gift cards to the same person. I'm sure they wouldn't mind, but my wallet would. I removed the names of the schools and replaced the participants' real names with pseudonyms before using the table in the final document. The columns emerged as I encountered more data to incorporate into the table—in other words, the order of events from the beginning of the process until the end of the process is not correct. The process as it unfolded in real time was as follows:

1. initial contact letter or
2. email contact or both,
3. consent form,
4. sometimes consent form sent with interview questions,
5. interview,
6. member check with or without gift card, and finally,
7. gift card.

**TABLE: TIMELINE OF PARTICIPANT STATUS**

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Initial Contact Letter</b>	<b>Interview/ Follow up Interview</b>	<b>Member check</b>	<b>Consent form</b>	<b>Interview questions sent</b>	<b>Gift card sent</b>	<b>Email contact</b>
<b>A1</b>	<b>Alexa</b> <i>Name of School Deleted</i>	4/01	4/16 4/20	5/1	4/10	4/10	4/16	4/01
<b>A2</b>	<b>Andrea</b>	4/01	5/27 5/30	6/9	4/10	4/10	4/16	In person
<b>B1</b>	<b>Bard</b>	4/01	4/18	4/25	4/10	4/01	4/18	4/01

	<i>Name of School Deleted</i>		4/21					
<b>B2</b>	<b>Brian</b>	4/16	5/11 5/12	5/12	4/29	4/16	5/7	4/16
<b>C1</b>	<b>Clay</b> <i>Name of School Deleted</i>	4/15	5/2 5/5	5/11	4/14	4/20	4/25	4/18
<b>C2</b>	<b>Catherine</b>	5/4	5/17 5/20	6/9	5/7	5/9	5/11	5/13
<b>D1</b>	<b>David</b> <i>Name of School Deleted</i>	4/01	4/28 5/1	5/13	5/13	4/01	4/28	4/01
<b>D2</b>	<b>Debra</b>	4/28	5/30 6/2	6/17	5/10	5/12	5/16	4/28
<b>E1</b>	<b>Emily</b> <i>Name of School Deleted</i>	4/15	5/4 5/8	5/14	4/22	4/15	4/22	4/15
<b>E2</b>	<b>Erica</b>	5/2	5/27 6/1	5/27-6/3	5/10	5/12	5/16	4/28
<b>F1</b>	<b>Fiona</b> <i>Name of School Deleted</i>	4/20	5/9 5/21	6/4	4/24	4/20	4/28	4/20
<b>F2</b>	<b>Frederick</b>	5/2	6/2 6/6	6/8	5/31	5/20	5/26	5/20
<b>G1</b>	<b>Gabrielle</b> <i>Name of School Deleted</i>	5/15	5/24 5/30	5/29	5/24	5/20	5/24	5/2
<b>G2</b>	<b>Gina</b>	5/24	5/28 6/1	6/9	5/30	5/24	5/28	5/24
<b>I1</b>	<b>Heather</b> <i>Name of School Deleted</i>	5/25	6/4 6/8	6/12	6/4	5/28	6/4	5/28
<b>I2</b>	<b>Hannah</b>	5/17	6/4 6/8	6/9	6/4	5/28	6/4	5/20
<b>N1</b> <b>No</b>	<b>Norm</b> <i>Name of School Deleted</i>	5/17	5/29	6/4	5/29	5/17	5/30	5/20
<b>N2</b>	<b>Norah</b>	Declined						
<b>O1</b> <b>No</b>	<b>Oria O1</b>	4/20	5/16	NONE	4/24	4/24	4/24	4/01
<b>O2</b>	<b>Declined</b>							
<b>P1</b> <b>No</b>	<b>P1</b> <b>Name of School</b>	4/01	4/20	5/12	4/24	4/21	4/20	4/16
<b>P2</b>	<b>P2</b>	DECLI						

	<b>Declined</b>	NED						
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Appendix G

A Critical Examination of Practices and Perceptions of  
Current Performance Evaluation Models for Theatre Arts Teachers in Virginia

Interview Questions and Follow-up Interview Questions: Theatre Arts Teachers

<b>Interview Question</b>	<b>Follow-up Interview Question</b>
1. Describe the evaluation process from the beginning of the year until the end of the year.	1a. Describe the tools or instruments included in the procedures. 1b. How are you informed of these procedures?
2. What are the required duties and expectations of your job as defined by your job description?  3. Describe how your evaluation process addresses strengths and recommended areas of growth for those being evaluated.  5. Describe the manner in which the results of employee appraisal are communicated (formal conference, report in your mailbox, etc.).	
7. What impact does the evaluation have on your teaching?  9. What training did you receive in order to understand the evaluation system?  10. How does your evaluation process differentiate between the job performance of teachers with unrelated job descriptions, such as classroom teachers and theatre teachers (your job)?  11. What links exist between evaluation data and planned staff development?	9a. Describe that training.
12. How does the evaluation process promote your professional growth?	

<p>13. To what degree does your current evaluation process accurately assess your job performance?</p> <p>15. What procedures are in place to ensure the confidentiality of teacher performance reviews?</p> <p>16. How does the performance evaluation protocol ensure objectivity in the evaluation process?</p>	
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Appendix H

A Critical Examination of Practices and Perceptions of  
Current Performance Evaluation Models for Theatre Arts Teachers in Virginia

Interview Questions and Follow-up Interview Questions: Administrators

Interview Question	Follow-up Interview Question
1. Describe the evaluation process from the beginning of the year until the end of the year.	1a. Describe the tools or instruments included in the procedures. 1b. How are you informed of these procedures? U2
3. Describe how your evaluation process addresses strengths and recommended areas of growth for those being evaluated. A9/P5  4. How do you ensure that evaluation data of theater arts teachers follows legal guidelines and is conducted in a confidential manner? (a) P3  5. Describe the manner in which the results of employee appraisal are communicated (formal conference, report in your mailbox, etc.) P4/A3  6. How does your evaluation process differentiate among teacher levels of performance and experience? P5/P7	4a. What processes are in place to ensure that performance reviews are conducted in a professional and constructive manner?  6a. Describe your “look-fors” and “red flags” in the teacher evaluation process.
8. What training did you receive to implement the evaluation system?  10. How does your evaluation process differentiate between the job performance of teachers with unrelated job descriptions, such as classroom teachers and theatre teachers? U4  11. What links exist between evaluation data and planned staff development? U6	8a. Describe that training. U3/U5
12. How does the evaluation process promote the professional growth of teachers with varying skill and experience levels? F1/F2	
13. To what degree does your current evaluation process accurately assess the job performance of theatre arts teachers? A1/P5  14. How is information generated from teacher observations and job performance documented and shared with teachers? A4  15. What procedures are in place to ensure the confidentiality of teacher performance reviews? A7  16. How does the performance evaluation protocol ensure objectivity	

in the evaluation process? A8	
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## Appendix I

### Sample Codes (Individual)

#### **EVALUATION PROCESS**

We're evaluated formally every three years, and so during each year we are supposed to accumulate professional evidence and then we put together a notebook of that evidence. During the third year, the assistant principal does at least one classroom visit and then we turn in the book and they review it and they evaluate us. On a regular year, when you are not up for evaluation, there are some informal classroom visits, there is a checklist and one of the things that I fell down on was that I didn't have my SOLs posted in my room. And I pointed out that I don't have a display area in my room and so I handed out my SOLs at the beginning of the year.

*Is your room considered the auditorium?*

Yes. So there is no where to put them. (laughs) So I was like, I don't have a place. So that didn't get corrected. But still that was the only issue that was brought up. And then my department chair is supposed to do informal visits and then if there is an issue she is supposed to address that with me.

sometimes they will sit for five or ten minutes. It's a walk-through.

It depends on the year. The year that you are up, your third year, it's at least twice. It's more if you are a probationary teacher. But it's at least twice. And in other years they'll walk in and spend a few minutes and they just have a really short checklist, but I couldn't find that on line to print out for you.

Oh no. We had—the downtown people were area supervisors. They are now curriculum and instruction specialists. So they don't have any specific supervisory capacity for us. They are there as resources and they manage all of that downtown nonsense with budget and textbook adoption and curriculum writing and administrative details. They do try to get out into the buildings here and there but there is no real schedule. In the early 80s we had supervisors and they actually did the interviewing. I don't believe they did the assignment to a school but they did the interviewing and said this is a viable candidate. And they would come in and they would sit in full classes and then they would give you an evaluation immediately afterwards.

#### **EVALUATION TOOLS**

You are supposed to include information that addresses all of these categories (shares evaluation form).

I'm supposed to have evidence that shows my planning assessment and achievement, instructional leadership, content knowledge and that kind of thing, safety and organizational management, professionalism and communication and community relations. This is what the assistant principal uses to evaluate—I know that this is the evidence that I am supposed to present and I know that these are the things in which I am being judged.

It may not be. I couldn't find it--it may be something that our building principals came up with. But it really addresses, you know, starts class on time, interacts with students, nobody died (laughs).

That's it. I assume that this is stored electronically.

### **INFORMED OF EVALUATION PROCEDURES**

I usually, towards the beginning of the year, will ask is this a year that you are evaluating me?

Now different department chairs may do that with different departments but it isn't done that way in my department because we are awfully small.

It's band, chorus, theatre, art and orchestra. Sometimes as you know, theatre falls under the English Department.

### **DUTIES AND EXPECTATIONS/JOB DESCRIPTION**

Do you mean outside of my classroom assignments? Yes. It—there is the standard, will maintain class order and provide accurate assessment and immediate response to parents and things like that. Just your basic classroom package. I have then an additional contract that is for being the drama sponsor and for that I am supposed to mount one full length play a year, sponsor a drama club and take a one act play to the VHSL play competition. And that's the total job description.

*But the actual job description--is that of a general classroom teacher as opposed to specifically theatre?*

Yes.

No. It addresses that by saying that you will use approved curriculum. We have a written curriculum.

### **EVALUATION PROCESS ADDRESSES STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

The evaluative instrument has four levels and the...if you get a four, then that means that you are consistently high in that area—from the rating scale—and you have the break down of it here. So the one, needs improvement, requires improvement, is at the other end. The thing is that evaluators are required, if they give you a zero or a one, they have to write about it. Or if they give you a four they have to write about it. And they have to write a lot less if it's a four, but they have to write specific recommendations for a zero or a one. So they have to sit down with you and then there's an action plan form that the administrator gives you saying here's where you really need to work on things and then you do it. And then they have periodic checks to see if you are making any effort in those areas. It does say at the bottom of it that I am signing saying that I have seen this but I have not necessarily agree with it.

### **RESULTS OF EMPLOYEE APPRAISALS ARE COMMUNICATED**

It's a, I would call it a formal conference. I will get a copy of it--after they sign it; they sign it, I sign it and then the principal signs it. The principal signs it after I sign and then I get a copy. But there is a conference about all of it. So the time turn around is simply going to the copy machine...so there is a conference behind closed doors.

Uh, I guess we could say it was scheduled. It was can you see me this afternoon, after school and it was yeah, what time? (laughs)

### **IMPACT OF EVALUATION**

The area that I got a three on for this last one really had to do with my turn around of student materials and I think I have an issue with that. I don't think that I'm as effective as I might be. I have a set of quizzes that kids took like two weeks ago, that I have not returned--they are graded but I'm still waiting on a couple of kids to take the quiz.

Because so many kids have to not take a lunch-study block in order to take my class, they really are kind of limited in those other times that they can come in to do that. So I am less aggressive than perhaps I should be to get that make-up work done. So I do feel like that was pointed out to me and it is something I have worked on.

I think it was...that one, number five—teacher provides appropriate documentation of student achievement.

And I think I've improved a lot this year because I paid attention to it.

Well...when I was getting three's and two's yeah, I did. I did a lot of soul-searching and talked to a couple of colleagues and...I felt...scolded. I do take teaching seriously and they were saying that I was mediocre and...and that's one of those personal demons that I have, remember in Salieri's...Salieri said that God had granted him the demon of mediocrity. And that's one of those things that has always sat on my shoulder. The idea that I could have a student who walked out not having...I'm not capable of brilliance, but they should get as much as I am capable of...And it said...that I really felt that it was saying that I wasn't good enough, and yet I know what I was doing and...so there was an anger and frustration.

*So it had a personal impact?*

Yes. And I'm sure that I externalized that some...you know, if what I'm doing isn't good enough, then what is there to do, kind of...

### **TRAINING TO UNDERSTAND EVALUATION**

You know, I don't know what they do now with the people coming in but this document landed on us. Like I said, there was a lot of talk about merit pay and all of the assistant principals were taken into training sessions downtown...they had several days of training. They were frustrated because they were being asked to use something that they didn't know anything about...and you know, evaluations were coming up and here's this thing that they, so...we had several optional sessions. One of the assistant principals who finished his training first conducted them in the library and there were several different afternoons that you could go in. I don't know what they do with new hires. But at this point, it's simply communicated at a faculty meeting at the beginning of the year that if you would like to discuss this with your assistant principal, please feel free if you don't understand it or if you have concerns.

They went through point by point the form, that's where they were explaining that twos and threes were good. And they showed us samples of things like this is a well-structured lesson plan and so when we are looking for effective plans we want this kind of information in it. Some department chairs require a specific lesson plan format but the school for the most part is OK with whatever format works for you.

### **EVALUATION PROCESS DIFFERENTIATE CLASSROOM TEACHERS/THEATRE TEACHERS**

I don't think it does. It's the same form, it's the same approach. I think I get a little credit for being the facility manager but there is nothing that includes all of that stuff.

### **EXISTING LINKS BETWEEN EVALUATION DATA AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

Staff development is planned primarily based on the test results. Right. If the kids in the geography SOL only got an 80% or whatever then clearly what we need to address are our teaching techniques to improve those test scores.

*So is there anything that comes out of the fine arts for staff development and evaluation data?*

No. We have some standard staff development about recognizing drug use, dealing with special education students—how to read an IEP. But nothing specific for the arts. We do have a staff day in August that we are going to be allowed to write, we can do our own staff development and we are supposed to write something defending that it is that we want to do. So I got all excited and we were talking about what can we do for this in-service day and I don't think we need a speaker, I think we need to be able to do some joint planning, but apparently that's not going to be good enough and we have write this defense for an hour and a half's worth of time. It was like—you are kidding me? We have to have this defensible rationale to be able to work together for an hour? So I haven't started putting jargon-ese together. But that's exactly what we will have to do.

### **PROFESSIONAL GROWTH**

It makes me focus on at least those items that are presented to see...I mean I actually have to pay attention, break those things out not think of them as just lumps of all of the same things. Um...I don't know that it does much else. Yes, I recognize that I don't turn papers back around which is something that I need to do, so occasionally there is something like that. You know I really sat down when I didn't do well with community relations and I sat down and I was like, OK, here's what I do and that simply left me to go back and say, here's what I do, what more, tell me what does a four do, tell me what a four is? So I guess it does make me itemize things a little. I think most people in the arts know where they need growth and they identify that for themselves and they search for programs that do that. If...you know there is always the 'theory du jour'. So right now we're working with understanding by design. I have to write curriculum in understanding by design. As will everybody else who has to write curriculum. But once that's written there's going to have to be some training for those teachers who have to use this material.

### **EVALUATION PROCESS ACCURATELY ASSESS JOB PERFORMANCE**

I don't think it does. Certain things do. Commitment to school and community, participates in meaningful and continuous professional development, maybe even collegial and collaborative manner of work with peers—but things like...it has to do with the teacher participates in resource allocation plans. There's no resource allocation for me to participation in planning. You know, I don't decide how much paper the building needs, I don't share textbooks, there is nothing that applies to me at all. Some of them are just so general—the teacher develops and implements classroom lesson plans that promote student achievement...OK, so if you are in a classroom that applies to anybody.

The teacher effectively employs processes for gathering, analyzing, and using data for decision making...I think that is so general that it doesn't mean anything to anybody. And there is nothing that addresses the range of material because my kids, I'll do a period play every three years to make sure that some time in that period that they get to do a Moliere or Shakespeare—they'll get to do some significant period piece. I have done *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown*, *The Music Man*, *The Wizard of Oz*, we're doing *The Sound of Music* now and then the next one will be a rock idiom so that they will have traditional, they've had contemporary and then they will have had the rock-jazz idiom so that they experience a variety of styles. We did *Dead Man Walking* this year so my goal in choosing that show, I wanted a show that allowed them to see that as artists they have power, that they can express their views and that they can have an impact on their community. There's nothing addresses that part of it in the evaluation. There is nothing that addresses, you know, it says, has rapport with students...that there is a communication that happens even in the interim classes that strengthens their ability to communicate; there is nothing that addresses creative problem-solving techniques; there is nothing that addresses allowing students to deal with issues that are immediate for them.

#### **PROCEDURES IN PLACE TO ENSURE CONFIDENTIALITY OF PERFORMANCE REVIEWS**

My conference is behind closed doors. My document has a cover sheet on it when it is put in my box. I am sure that the administrative team talks about it. I have heard other teachers talk about other people's evaluations but I assume that is because the teacher said something about it. Under the previous administration I think there was some talk from an administrator to selected staff members but that was a personality issue...I feel protected, there is nothing broadcast. Occasionally, no...in the threes and twos day, I said, tell me a teacher here who has all fours so I can go and observe them...and he wouldn't do it.

#### **PERFORMANCE EVALUATION PROCESS ENSURE OBJECTIVITY**

I don't think it does. That and when they talked about this being a basis for merit pay there was a lot of talk about what about the influence of the building principal or the assistant principal...and I was very aware that my principal was why I was not being seen as an effective teacher. She didn't like me, she didn't like my program, she had someone under her wing who hated me--was a person in our department and he wanted control of the theatre and so he did everything he could to malign me and to convince her to get me out of that space and out of control of that space and it was common knowledge that she saw me as a pariah in this building. A group of us, I guess it's on my other necklace...I have a little flying pig...and uh, several of us had flying pigs because we said we would bend over and take it from her when pigs fly. But people would, just random people, would see me in the hall and say, I am so sorry. So it was awful. But it is a clear example of what inequity can exist in the evaluation system. And had this gone to merit pay, and I don't know that all those conversations are completely dropped, but had it gone to that, I definitely would have suffered. Oh absolutely.

#### **MISC**

(cell phone rings/call)... Um,  
*How long have you been at this school?*  
 Twenty-six years.  
 At that time it was English. That's it.

### **RELATIONSHIPS AND EFFECT ON EVALUATION**

At first I was, when I did theatre and public speaking to start, I was under the English department and everybody realized that I didn't belong there and so we formed a fine arts department and most of the schools have done this now. Well, I only taught English for two years and that was it was clear that that was not where I needed to be. And at the time I was at a junior high and I had one English class for each of two years and the rest was theatre and public speaking and then that program grew so it was mostly theatre and some public speaking and then I came here. And again I had public speaking for three years but no English classes.

### **UNIQUE NATURE OF TEACHING THEATRE**

No, all theatre. We have an intro level, we have an intermediate performance and the tech class is an intermediate level class and then we have studio ensemble which is the upper level class. It's an all performance class; it's performance technique. You can have up to five kids who are designers in that class, who work, when you have one, as an independent study and whatever show cases you are putting together they design and then we try to build.

Not all of it. Some of it is. By the time that we got to the point of formatting it to putting it on line we were already looking at this round of curriculum of development. Just a few pieces ended up on-line and we decided that with this one, we are structuring it so that it can be posted so there was no sense in killing a secretary trying to get it all formatted to have it hang for a year.

No. Because my lesson plan can't look like anybody else's.

No, they don't have a specific lesson plan format. Right, it's different for each of us because we are so different in each discipline. It's different for what we do.

*What does a facility manager do? Is that part of your coaching contract?*

No, it's what I do. I manage the whole space. There is no contract for it but because it is my space I have a whole lot more freedom by going ahead and doing that. I set the calendars. And there are places where that does not occur and it is hideous. And I had a year that I was kicked out the theatre just because they could. For instance I had an intro class in an art room with tables and slowly I managed to get back in there because I'd have to work out in the hall and we were noisy. And then the wall fell—we had to have our wall taken down there was termite damage.

In the theatre. The exterior wall had to come down and be put back up. So we did have to live in a portable for that period of time but I was allowed to be the only person in there so that I could arrange desks and do what I had to so that I could kind of make it work and we knew that it was short lived.

Oh yes. I'm looking forward to using it. For us, it makes perfect sense. You start with the end and then you work backwards to figure out the steps. You know what the show is, you know what opening night is, and you work backwards to auditions to figure out what



your schedule is. And do you need a dance instructor, do you need music people and so...that's exactly what we do...but I do think that it's going to be very difficult for some areas. I think it will be easy for math. Because they know that they have to get to this and it's very step-oriented. So I don't think it will be tough for them. But I think it will be very tough for foreign language because we start at the beginning and how much can you get. You know, instead of, you've got to be able to have this conversation by x date and what are the steps that lead up to it.

### **UNIQUE NATURE OF EVALUATING THEATRE TEACHERS**

Yes. There are certainly programs where Little Mary Sunshine is the standard and that is what they do all the time. And I see the after-school program as co-curricular and not as extra-curricular. And a child does not have to be in main stage performances in order to participate or get valuable interactions...but what we're working on provides me with materials for those kids...so even if they're not participating they at least feel the impact.

I do think that evaluations need to be...maybe this is fine...

This notion of evaluation is fine. But I think there should be an additional piece that should apply to the subject area.

*You mean in addition to this or a completely different and unique for the arts?*

I think for every subject area. It's sort of like judging that one act play—the apples and oranges thing. We were administering SOL tests and my partner...you know it takes two people to proctor the SOL test in a room and I was the one reading the directions...and all the kids were lined up and everybody was seated and all the test tickets were handed. And she said, N, what's wrong? And I said—this is just too structured for me...I have straight lines and I have walls around me and people are lined up...I don't think I've ever maybe in my first two English classes I used seating charts but those things just don't apply to me...I understand why they are necessary for some teachers. And so I think how a foreign language teacher runs a classroom has to be different than how even an English teacher runs a classroom even though they are kind of related—they are really not. There is, I just really think that there should be something...and as the assistant principals get to know their subject areas--the ones that they supervise--I think that we have a good team and that they do try to do something like that but there is no way to express it unless they are really willing to sit and write. We talk about best practices--why isn't there a best practices in a foreign language classroom and a checklist—oh, that is a best practice, I see that in her.

### **DISCONNECT BETWEEN ADMINS/THEATRE TEACHERS**

Well when this first came out, we were aware that the assistant principals were being told to give two's and three's. Yeah. And it was...it fired a lot of us up because we were told, two's are good, two's mean that you are doing well. And all of us are going--No, two says that we are doing average. Nobody is that stupid (laughs). And this came into place when there was an awful lot of talk about merit pay. So it was more threatening than it is now. And I believe that in some schools, and it was the case here for a while, that this was used as a power tool. But I had a formal last year and I got all fours. Except for one three, which I agreed with actually—but the time before that, I had several threes and I had an issue...I got a two (*shows me the form*) on that category.

*Communication and community relations?*

And I was like, OK. Now you tell me, tell me what a four is. Explain to me how much more I need to be doing with the community. That's who I deal with. I take the kids out into the community, we bring people in from the community...my whole program is an open book to the community. Tell me what else I am supposed to do. And he said, well, I suppose...

*Did he correct it?*

He did change it.

(Laughs). And I'm like, OK boss, tell me how a math teacher gets a four on that?

*So at that point, what did you do?*

Well, I had a conference with him when I went in to see him and I said, I don't get it.

And I said, I don't plan to sign this until it's corrected.

*Reads aloud: Teacher actively promotes partnerships with families to enhance student learning at home and at school—*

How much more can I do? But I really believe that that came from the administration that was in place because as soon as that changed—

*The administration?*

Yeah...the administration—I got all fours. And I don't think that I did anything different...I think the timbre of things changed.

Appendix J

Sample Codes (Team)

<b>Evaluation Process</b>	
<b>Teacher: A1</b>	<b>Administrator: A2</b>
<p>For your first three years, the evaluation process is fairly strict and you are observed by three different administrators—the head of fine arts from the school board office does one of the evaluations, your department head and then the assistant principal from your discipline. Then you are told beforehand vaguely when they will be asking for a pre-conference and you go in prepared; they can call it at any time. They usually give you at least a day. You go in with your lesson plans and you go in with a ready-attitude to talk and ask any questions. They go through the evaluation form and ask you if there are any questions. You can talk about any problems you are having and class management or with the curriculum and it's a time for clarification. Mostly from your dept. head and the asst. principal. Now, that takes place three times a year for your first three years of employment and it's fairly steady and it's a time of, I think, time of tension for the teacher because somehow you think somehow this magical process is going to condemn you or give you a gold star, you know, I don't know, you know a star on the walk of fame or something. However, that rarely, rarely, happens. And so it's just evaluation anxiety similar to test anxiety. Once you become tenured, it backs off considerably because of the tenure system in the state of Virginia... I would say that there's not a lot an awful lot that they're going to be talking to you about that they haven't corrected in your first three years because if they haven't corrected it, you are not there (DIFFERENTIATES TEACHER LEVELS)...if they have corrected it, they</p>	<p>We have a specific time line for all of the paper work that we have to do and the order of things in which we do things...the T 1s and 2s are the teacher goals and some of the them are developed here at the school level in alignment with what's going on at the county level. The teachers are supposed to work with the administrators in crafting those before we get to the middle of October—sometimes they're a little bit more prescriptive than other years just depending on what's going on in the school. And then how they are going to fulfill those is part of what they have to do at that point. And then from October until February we do the observation process and the forms haven't changed in forever and ever and ever so the classroom observation form is the same from year to year. We share that with the teachers back in the fall. And we have to do two on each teacher who is not within the first three years or any untenured teacher. And in our school we actually have parted that now so that administrators do one and department heads do one and then we take the information from both of those and work on creating a summative evaluation that we are supposed to get to the teachers before contracts so I think we typically get those to them by the end of March or the beginning of April and they're supposed to reflect back upon those T1s, those goals, as part of the evaluation procedure as well but to be honest we don't do a very good job of having that really be in place as part of the evaluation performance or summative. Good question. Let me see if I can find</p>

may talk about it a little bit, offer some insight you have a very informal meeting for pre-evaluation, they *finally* come in almost at the end of the time, trying to get your evaluation done at the end of the end of the year, rushing to get your evaluation done; each one differs. The administrators who are pushed for time stay fifteen or twenty minutes; and actually give you the opportunity to offer which class to attend, oh come to this class because this is what we are doing and it will be very interesting, instead of just a spot check. Um, which is nice, they give you a time to show the students off in their best light and that kind of thing. I do have and I have had dept. heads stay for the entire ninety minutes, ripping every single thing. And that's fine, too. It just doesn't bother me in particular, I know that it can upset, or can rattle not upset, a few other teachers even more seasoned ones...but we're in theatre and we're used to being observed or observing. And sometimes the students actually behave much better. They act far more intelligent than they normally do because somehow they think that *they* are being evaluated! I have never, I have never told them otherwise! (laughs)

At the end of the year, you get another sit-down and particularly if there is something you need to work on, that's discussed. However, after you are tenured, you have the harried AP running in to throw you the post-evaluation check and you read through it, you go thank you very much, that's very kind of you, you sign it and eventually you will get a copy. Now, if I were a hard-nosed business person I would be possibly be making that evaluation as important as it was in the first three years in the fifth year, in the fifteenth year and onward.

Now that I'm tenured, only the dept. head does one and the AP does the other.

that—we just call them the TE1s and 2s. Probably teacher evaluation.

<p>Unless there is an issue.</p>	
<p><b>Evaluation Instruments/Tools</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: A1</b></p>	<p><b>Administrator: A2</b></p>
<p>(laughter) The evaluation sheet for anyone in fine arts, and teaching core curriculum in English and theatre, I have seen the difference, of course. The evaluation sheet for classroom observation is not bad for core subjects (reads from sheet): “prepares written lesson plans to support instructional objectives with an (inaudible) curriculum guidelines in Virginia’s standards of learning.” And that could account for theatre as well—in some areas. But it tends to fall apart for the fine arts people. (UNRELATED JOB DESCRIPTIONS) In trying to recreate the wheel, they came up a massive eight-part form that really went into exactly how the teacher was teaching the curriculum and it’s really good form; I of course, but a spammer in the works two years ago when it was presented to us and walked up to the AP who designed it and said: basically you are setting up all of your fine arts people, your vo-tech people, anyone who is not a core, to fail. And they looked at me surprised and said, what do you mean? And I said: none of this applies to our area of discipline and so we cannot exceed expectations or even meet expectations, therefore we will always be below expectations and we will fail. The evaluation form is not used. (laughs). They did look at it and they did go through it and it wasn’t just that one statement that, you know...was the end of it.</p> <p>It was going to be a district-wide form until</p>	<p>OK, the TE1s and 2s are the where the goals are where the goals are laid out for the teachers and they come up with three or four each year and they have to tell what it is that they are going to do to fulfill the goal and then at the end they are supposed to demonstrate how those goals are fulfilled--maybe bringing in other documentation depending upon how the goal is written. Then the other tools are the classroom observation form that we use and then the summative evaluation form that’s used.</p> <p><i>(use of computer?)</i> Only as it comes up—nothing formal.</p>

a lot of us brought up the possibility that anything that was not a core curriculum subject would be set up to fail and therefore it was not a fair evaluation tool. So what we have is a totally ineffective evaluation tool for, and I'll speak for performing arts...there are very general statements on planning, instructional process, assessment, and climate and safety, professional responsibilities, to date, communication and those things, because they stay so broad, are fairly easy to at least meet an expectation on, unless you are somewhat incompetent. So once a teacher has a teacher has, I would say, five years of experience, the observation form that turns into your evaluation form is really quite straight-forward and it's the basic things that you should be doing in the class. The final evaluation form is miniscule, and it's just divided into planning, and the observation form has subheadings, the evaluation form—the summative—is just divided into planning, instructional process, assessment, classroom climate, professional responsibility. For the last few years, I've exceeded expectation in all of those areas. And there is some general comments...and they are usually kind, as far as exceeds expectations, dot, dot, dot...and it's usually very generous. I have seen comments such as needs to provide more written analysis of testing measurement or something like that, when they have someone who is, perhaps, making homework too great of a grade, as compared to in-class work...that type of thing. I've seen those kinds of written comments on there...so it is a time to write down anything. But if you are doing your job and you are doing it well it's a pat on the back, and you sign it and it goes to the school board office and to the netherworld of your file, I guess.

<b>Informed of Evaluation Procedures</b>	
<b>Teacher: A1</b>	<b>Administrator: A2</b>
<p>your mentor that you are assigned to when you are a new teacher is supposed to—along with the dept. head, and the senior teacher—are all supposed to give you that background. And they are all very communicative at X (name of school), they are very open about that—you can go to them at any time and ask questions and that kind of thing. And you can certainly disagree! And you are given that opportunity to disagree. My point has always been, if you are going to disagree, make sure it is an important enough point and put it in writing, so that it is attached to that summative evaluation.</p>	<p>It's all policy...and S (principal) puts out a memo at the beginning of each year that gives the timeline and a copy of the documents that the teachers need to know about that we are going to use.</p>
<b>Duties and Expectations/Job Description</b>	
<b>Teacher: A1</b>	<b>Administrator: A2</b>
<p>your mentor that you are assigned to when you are a new teacher is supposed to—along with the dept. head, and the senior teacher—are all supposed to give you that background. And they are all very communicative at X (name of school), they are very open about that—you can go to them at any time and ask questions and that kind of thing. And you can certainly disagree! And you are given that opportunity to disagree. My point has always been, if you are going to disagree, make sure it is an important enough point and put it in writing, so that it is attached to that summative evaluation.</p>	
<b>Evaluation Process Addresses Strengths and Weaknesses</b>	
<b>Teacher: A1</b>	<b>Administrator: A2</b>
<p>If you have a good mentor, if you have a good senior teacher and a good AP and you ask the right questions—then you are fine. But if you do not ask the right questions, it's assumed you know the answers...so</p>	<p>That typically comes into the play in the classroom observation and in the summative form and the classroom observation we're encouraged, under the evaluator notes, to—like the county's big</p>

<p>you could live in, I guess, ignorant bliss forever. So recommended areas of growths is in possibly the written area of the final evaluation process or the observation form when the observer has perhaps seen something for example: “this teacher could have summed up a little bit better, in attempting to make this a teachable moment, when on too long. They need to get back on track.” Those are areas where you might look. I don’t know if there is classroom management. Which I think is the biggest problem in public schools. If a teacher is weak in classroom management, unless the kids are throwing chairs against the walls, then they are sent to seminars.</p> <p><i>[Is there anywhere on the form that addresses your strengths and recommended areas of growth for theatre teachers?]</i></p> <p>No. No because the AP, the senior teacher and even your department head—none of them are theatre people. If I were the department head, I’d be the only theatre person. And I’d be telling myself what to improve upon. These are people that know that they do not understand what we are teaching!</p>	<p>thing is three glows and a grow—I know—you are supposed to pull out three positives and one area of growth—I cannot bring myself to do it that way, so I don’t. So I just write a narrative and pull out what I think are critical areas. I try to make sure that there are some strengths that are identified but I don’t limit it to one area of growth if I feel like there are other things that need to be addressed.</p> <p>In a summative unless a teacher has been on a plan, the teacher is going to meet or exceed expectations and in that sort of blurb for the summative you pull out primarily what the strengths are for the teacher. If there are any issues that need to be addressed that’s a whole different piece of documentation that gets generated throughout the observation process and looks a little bit different because you identify areas where there are significant weaknesses an then you have to work with the teacher to identify how those weaknesses are going to be ameliorated--to be fixed...so...</p>
<p><b>Follows Legal Guidelines</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: A1</b></p>	<p><b>Administrator: A2</b></p>
	<p>When I saw that question I was taken aback because I would have expected that everything that is in our policy to be aligned with legal expectations...so one of the things that I did was I went back to look at that and I can’t find anything that specifically relates to how it would be under legal guidelines other than we follow the policy that is in place and that’s just doing the classroom observations and using the document tools that are provided by the county...and following the timeline that is outlined by the county.</p>



<b>Performance Reviews Conducted Professionally/Constructively</b>	
<b>Teacher: A1</b>	<b>Administrator: A2</b>
<p>. I do have and I have had dept. heads stay for the entire ninety minutes, ripping every single thing.</p>	<p>OK. Um, I guess the professionalism is that, is that it is something that is upfront. It's shared with the evaluatees in advance; there is supposed to be a lot of give and take in that the evaluatees are giving their own ideas for performance targets and how they are going to go about demonstrating that. When we do classroom observations we do the pre-conference and the post-conference so there's a dialogue that's involved rather than just doing the evaluation and just shipping it off somewhere else. If there is a performance issue that document, the performance evaluation where there's remediation and there's issues that have to be remediated before the summative...that process is always done in conjunction with the teacher--it's not implemented top-down...it's supposed to be a dialogue where the solution is agreed upon by both the administrator and the teacher. Um, so I think that's part of it. And I try to do, when I do my pre-conferences, to give some flexibility if I can about when I come in so that a teacher can highlight what it is that she feels is her strength or if a teacher feels like there is an issue in the classroom that she wants some response for—not disciplinary—but just some advice as to how to deal with that...we can look at it that way. So there's a lot of different avenues where I think professionalism comes into play.</p> <p>Right. I think that some of it...I mean the pre- and post-conference are definitely policy. The idea that these performance targets are co-created, that's part of policy. It's definitely something that is supposed to be collaborative. And to me, that's probably the biggest thing. But they talk about teachers who disagree what recourse</p>

	<p>they have in terms of putting something written in the evaluation but there's a lot, and of course because it's legal, you know, there's a lot of focus on when there is a problem this is what we do. Rather than on the teachers who are doing a good job but are still going through this process in the hopes of becoming even better than they already are and I tend to think that we don't do as good a job in working with those teachers.</p>
<p><b>Results of Employee Appraisals are Communicated</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: A1</b></p>	<p><b>Administrator: A2</b></p>
<p>I think I described the results at the very beginning. The results, a dept. head will bring it to you and say do you want to sit and chat about this—particularly in your first three years. And if they have something that they need to discuss with you...then they will sit you down and it will be a formal conference. If it is nothing, which has always been my case, it's: oh you are brilliant. Here go ahead and sign this and sign off on it. And it's like "OK". It's handed it to you—physically handed to you. They see you. You get to see the person.</p>	<p>We have conferences after each of the observations and then there's a conference for the summative. Now I'm going to be completely honest with you, I don't always get to the conference in the way that I would like...so while we're supposed to have a conference sometimes it's "here's what I've done, if you have any questions or you want to talk about this, my door is always open"—which isn't as proactive as it should be. I'm being honest.</p>
<p><b>Impact of Evaluation</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: A1</b></p>	<p><b>Administrator: A2</b></p>
<p>It's always nice to know that you are at least appreciated. And that your efforts have been recognized at some level. And of course, to get the comment: "Mrs. X's knowledge in both literature and in drama far exceeds expectations. She's demonstrated skills in making her classes challenging and yet accessible to her students. The work that Ms. B has done with the drama program will be sorely missed upon her retirement." I always giggle at that—"best of luck". It's not really that I'm really retiring; I'm just able</p>	

<p>to take retirement from this state. That's all. So, if it's a good evaluation, it has a good impact—it's like saying: great, I'm doing the right thing—I feel good.</p> <p>the gentleman that I've been training for a couple of years now got a very good evaluation this year. He had some things that he needed to fix last year and so this year, he was just very very excited. It reinforced...it allowed him to breathe easier; it allowed him to feel like he was on the right track, that he was doing the right thing. So, I think it can certainly...conversely, if you've got something obnoxious in your evaluation that you needed to fix, I think the first reaction to criticism is to be a little kid and stomp around and say it's not fair and that they don't understand—and then you need some distance from it to be able to say: these are things I need to fix. I think that if you are a good teacher you know what you have to fix; particularly when you walk out of the school in the evening totally drained because you've just had one of those days and the students missed something that you don't think that they should have missed so what did <i>you</i> do wrong? So I think you know that the performing arts teacher is constantly evaluating themselves and their effective and one of those things is through the performance or through the end of the day, or through the scene work or whatever is happening there in the studio—the finished work. It's like: they got it, there's a break-through there. That's great. Or, why do they hate this so much? OK, I'm at fault.</p>	
<p><b>Evaluation Process Differentiates Teacher Levels</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: A1</b></p>	<p><b>Administrator: A2</b></p>
<p>: the evaluation process changes dramatically once you are tenured.</p>	<p>And it depends also on where the teacher is in terms of her professional career—you know, it's not that expectations for the</p>

	<p>summative change but when I'm going into a classroom observation the degree of expertise of the teacher has to come into play in terms of what I'm pulling out for the teacher to work on. I'm not going to pull out something very subtle for a new teacher to work on and I'm not going to give a glow for a great job on your bulletin board for a twenty year veteran. There has to be, you know, some sort of flexibility with that.</p> <p>I think the process really only differentiates as much as the administrator is willing to do that. Um, the evaluation itself, the final instrument that is used only allows you to categorize teachers in three areas—does not meet expectations, meets expectations and exceeds expectations. So there really is not much differentiation on paper for any of that.</p> <p><i>So if you have a first year teacher or a thirty year they are still evaluated using the same instruments and the same process?</i></p> <p>Yes. Right.</p>
<p><b>Look fors and Red Flags</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: A1</b></p>	<p><b>Administrator: A2</b></p>
	<p>My look fors are primarily within the classroom. I tend to look at what students are doing more than what the teachers are doing even though the tools are designed much more for look fors for teachers...to me I look for for students—are they engaged, what are they doing during the lesson, how are they responding, what is their attitude towards learning, what kinds of questions are they asking, are they asking any questions, what types of performance are they doing within the classroom in terms of what types of assessments and what types of activities and how is that leading towards their understanding, their learning of the subject matter.</p> <p><i>And that in turn reflects upon how the</i></p>

	<p><i>teacher is doing?</i> Right.</p> <p>Red flags are, and this is, I have a caveat with this one—this one has an asterisk next to it...because I know better. Chaos is a red flag for me but I have had to train myself to look for chaos that is meaningful and instructional in nature and chaos that is purely as a result of poor classroom management. So when I say chaos I know that the immediate thing is that art classes and theatre classes often look chaotic if you don't know what it is that you are looking at. So I'm careful, I'm more careful, in those types of situations to try to discern whether the chaos is instructional in nature or whether it is simply a result of poor classroom management.</p> <p><i>And how did you learn to tell the difference?</i> Listening a lot, moving around the room a lot...</p>
<p><b>Training to Implement /Understand Evaluation System</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: A1</b></p>	<p><b>Administrator: A2</b></p>
<p><b>[TRAINING TO UNDERSTAND EVALUATION]</b> Oh, none. I can't remember a single in house...or in-service...that said this is...we're going to take a half an hour to explain this.</p>	<p>And then when I became an administrator they gave us a day-long training on doing evaluations but the primary focus of that was scripting...and I don't know if you remember that from being in the county or not...but the primary focus of that was scripting and we're supposed to take down everything word for word. So they trained us on how to take down everything word for word and then label the script according to the professional teaching act. They've back off on that a little bit, thankfully, because you can get so busy writing things down that you aren't seeing that Suzy's hair is getting cut off and you know, you just have no idea of what is going on in the classroom because you are so busy writing everything down.</p>

	<p><i>Tell me more about the scripting class...</i>          It really was a day-long thing where we would have to practice scripting and then we would go through and we would say OK if we are labeling for, say the Madeline Hunter model, what would you put in the margin here and how would you describe what is going on here and that sort of thing.</p>
<p><b>Differentiation Unrelated Job Descriptions</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: A1</b></p>	<p><b>Administrator: A2</b></p>
<p>The process on paper and everything written down—there is no differentiation. We are supposed to um, be observed exactly the same way, and I understand that it is the same for everyone. However, if you have graphic arts, and mass-comm, and newspaper journalism and shop and horticulture and theatre...you have a controlled chaos situation in the classroom, which is a wonderful environment for learning.</p>	<p>It doesn't. Because the way that they break up the evaluation process it's into five different categories and they are so global. I guess within each of those you can kind of do it yourself. But it doesn't really explicitly allow for that at all.  <i>Is it applicable?</i>          It can be made to be applicable if you look at it kind of with your eyes squinted (laughs). But it's...it has to be able to be used in a theatre class and in an English class and a P.E. class and so it's divided into planning, which every teacher should do regardless of discipline, instructional process and then it just talks about aligned instructional activities and content knowledge and engaging students and learning and things like that. And so those can be transported into all of those classroom environments. Assessment I think is a little bit more difficult because they talk about assessment instruments and I don't think that unless you've either done evaluation of fine arts for a while or had specific training or had that as your background, I don't think you are going to be able to recognize what assessment tools are meaningful in those environments. That was where I really had a learning curve.</p>
<p><b>Links Between Evaluation Data and Staff Development</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: A1</b></p>	<p><b>Administrator: A2</b></p>

<p>Again...none!</p>	<p>None. There isn't any. As far as I know the evaluations that we do go into their folder in the personnel office and it doesn't ever get looked at by anybody who does anything with staff development. And from the school perspective we're looking at what do our students need for professional development. I guess the only link would be if a teacher is on a plan, a remediation plan then we tend to build in a professional development component that will help to remediate a weakness...like find a conference or put them in a peer coaching situation or something like that.</p>
<p><b>Evaluation Process Promotes Professional Growth</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: A1</b></p>	<p><b>Administrator: A2</b></p>
<p>Well, it doesn't really—right? You know, if I've managed the classroom properly, they go: well, she's a good teacher. But if I don't know anything about theatre management, if I feed the kids pizza during rehearsal and we sit and chit chat, um, what do they know? And if I put garbage on the stage—what do they know? That is as much as part of my job, as the classroom experience. And of course we don't get paid for it like that and all that, but chorus is in the same boat, band is the same boat—it's like you could be sitting around doing nothing all year and putting total garbage on those stages. So, you know, it doesn't help my professional growth. You get a little pat on the back, OK your classroom management is fine...but you know, you cost the school \$6000 because you fried the light board here for example. Coaches have better job descriptions and better guidelines than theatre teachers. Not everybody has the same responsibilities—like one person is responsible for just the one act, and others have a full year of shows.</p>	<p>That's done at the beginning of the year with the goals. As long as the principal doesn't force everyone to have all of the same goals there's room for teachers and evaluators to collaboratively come up with some professional growth ideas and differentiate in that way.  <i>Who comes up with those goals?</i>                  The principal does...well, it depends on the school and it depends on the year. Right now there is a lot with alignment in the county. S (principal) has been taking the superintendent's goals and his goals have to align with the superintendent's goals and so he has started making the teachers' goals align with his goals. Which is all well and good for classroom things but it doesn't take into account personal goals that the teachers might have. So we've encouraged him in the last year to at least leave the last one for teachers to make their own suggestions with their administrator in order to do that.                  It has been in the past. When I first got here you created three or four of your own and now it's you do three or four that are told to you and maybe you get to do one on your own.</p>

<b>Evaluation Accurately Assesses Job Performance/Theatre</b>	
<b>Teacher: A1</b>	<b>Administrator: A2</b>
<p>Well, I have to go back to that...again, if we're just taking it in the classroom, it's unfortunate that the head of curriculum and instruction walked in when we were doing a satire for the mass communication kids and I was 'harming' the students in a comic fashion for the camera and I had to call out and go "good afternoon, Mr. Baker, this is a collaboration for the advanced mass communication and advanced theatre people"...it had nothing to do with evaluation, it did show a collaborative spirit across the board and the fact that I had all these things going on; however, for a lesser supervisor, it could have been disturbing possibly (laughs). From a structured classroom environment, from what you are doing in the classroom, I think it's fine...but then I think about chorus and band, who take all of their class time to rehearse and some after school. But their whole class is set up for the performance. Theatre differs in that it is an academic course, where the background must be learned, there is a studio application to that background and then everything happens after school. Now some teachers do it differently, and they go OK, we are rehearsing everything in class. That's their prerogative. If it was only a studio production class, I don't think that the evaluation process could assess the job performance because it is so hard to tell, for an outsider to tell at what point you are at in your rehearsal process. Um, I can lecture, and I mean, any of us who have been in the field for a number of years can immediately lecture and have a teachable moment on any aspect of a production of what you are studying. For a younger theatre teacher it would be much tougher. And actually the younger theatre teacher</p>	<p>I don't know. Um and here's why I don't know. P has been our theatre teacher ever since I started doing this. And so I have nothing to compare her to other than DP who has come in to do a class or two here or there but I pretty much evaluated him in the English classroom because he's been a three/two split with three English classes and two theatre arts. So while I see him in the theatre classroom a little bit I haven't really done a full-fledged theatre evaluation of him. So I have no basis for comparison as to what P is like compared to other theatre teachers in the county other theatre teachers in Virginia. I know how she ranks with other teachers in our school in terms of how she is perceived as an instructor, how well her students realize the objectives of the curriculum. Am I answering your question?</p> <p>I would say as a teacher, teacher, just as a teacher just like any other teacher, I would say that it does a pretty good job but as specific to being a theatre teacher, I don't know.</p>



<p>using only the classroom for as a rehearsal period is missing the boat. Because if they don't have that historic structure of culture and society and study of the playwrights, the physics of lighting, all of those things, if they don't have that, they are not going to get the degree of quality in their outside productions. So, it would depend. If I were just being evaluated in the classroom, fine, you know it's an OK evaluation, with huge generalities, nothing specific and you know, it could be used unfairly because it is not an objective process by any means. With that subjectivity you have to be liked or appreciated or at least respected and if the person doesn't like you... they could really have some problems with your classroom teaching, um and that is really definite in the fine arts area, particularly with theatre.</p>	
<p><b>Information Generated From Evaluations Shared with Teachers</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: A1</b></p>	<p><b>Administrator: A2</b></p>
	<p>It goes into a folder. The summative is supposed to be a very formal conversation. Mine tend to be a little less formal. Mine are very informal. Sometimes it's just a hey, here's what I'm thinking, uh, if you have any questions come on back to me and we'll talk about it further. I don't think anybody's ever surprised what's on the summative because we talk all year long even if it's not in a formal sense. Again, it's like everybody's so glad to just have it done with that...and unfortunately it's done so early in the year that for the last three months of school nobody's evaluating anybody. And so, I don't know. It's a frustrating thing. You know, give me thirty-four teachers that I am supposed evaluate and how good of a job do you think that I am going to be able to do? <i>You've got thirty-four teachers to evaluate?</i> Right. In addition to all of my other responsibilities.</p>

	<p><i>And you've got fine arts?</i>                  I have fine arts, history and English. The two huge SOL departments and a high maintenance elective department.                  Right. I don't. We don't go a good job.</p>
<p><b>Confidentiality of Teacher Performance Reviews</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: A1</b></p>	<p><b>Administrator: A2</b></p>
<p>I don't know. I do know this. I think if they're not worried about you, they hand it to you personally, so that nobody can go through your mailbox or find it laying around or what have you...but I do know this...if there is a problem they are very, very, quiet about it. It does not come from the administration if there are issues. The teacher themselves may be yelling and screaming but the administration shuts down like a fort. The drawbridge is up and that's it. So they are very sensitive about confidentiality if it's a bad thing. But I've had people all around me as I've been handed an evaluation. However, there has been a problem with those evaluations. It's given to me, the final, fully signed final blah, blah, blah, is given to me in an envelope. But the one I need to sign has just been "oh here, quickly, sign this".</p> <p><i>[And that's been done in front of other people?]</i>                  Oh yeah. Right. If it were not good, I'm sure and I'm sure, they'd call for a meeting. They're not silly. If it's bad, you know they are confidential. If it's good—nah, they don't care.</p>	<p>The only people who see those are the teacher and myself and the principal and then the principal sends it directly up to the school board office.</p> <p><i>Do they sign it?</i>                  Yes. They get a copy and we keep a copy here. I don't tend to keep my copies from year to year because technically I'm not supposed to. If it's a personnel document it stays in the personnel file. I can keep things for a year in order to create a year in order to create the summative but then I don't keep things past a year...I believe it does, yes.</p> <p>I do my own.                  I think that is school-wide. I've seen S (principal) typing up ours so I'm pretty sure that everybody does their own.</p> <p><i>Is that written down anywhere?</i>                  I don't think so. It's just done that way. That's how we've done it since I've been there.</p>
<p><b>Ensuring Objectivity in the Evaluation Process</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: A1</b></p>	<p><b>Administrator: A2</b></p>
<p>Well, it doesn't, does it? I think with check-off items with the observation: (reads): "designs coherent instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter students, the community and the curriculum</p>	<p>Ugh. That's tough because there are two different kinds of issues here. There's...I guess it speaks to reliability and validity. But um, there's the whole am I being consistent within, between observation to</p>

goals”...well, even that, if the community has made a complaint, or the students seem lethargic, couldn’t you use that against the teacher? Of course you could. If everyone is having a rest day, chorus comes back from a grueling weekend of tapping their little hearts out in their sequins, and they sit around just watching tapes of past performance just to debrief. So what if you are going to walk in and do your observation then? Not going to be an exciting time if you don’t know what is happening in that environment. So I don’t think it’s terribly objectively at all.  
No.

observation, am I being consistent from teacher to teacher...but then there’s a whole other scope of, OK what are the other three assistant principals doing? And is there, is there a sense that we all have the same set of expectations. And what we did as an administrative team two years ago is really tried to delineate exactly what it means to exceed expectations in each of the categories. And it got really a little bit excessive to me in the descriptors but we created a whole set of descriptors for each of the different categories. Now we’ve gotten two new APs since then. And we probably haven’t done a really good job in training them in using that same tool. But at least that tool exists. Um, is it objective? A lot of it is you either get a yes or a no or a did not see—and so the objectivity it’s hard because it’s based on well what part of the lesson did you see? Did you see, have you been in twice and only seen the beginning of the class? So you have no basis for evaluating how they closure. So I think that it’s very subjective. I think if we had more data points it would become more objective, but you are talking about people observing people and it just doesn’t, I mean it just doesn’t, I mean it’s objective as it’s going to get when you are dealing with that type of situation.

*It sounds like you are saying that the instrument is set up to be objective, but could be considered subjective based on who is using it—especially if they don’t understand the discipline they are evaluating?*

Yes, yes. And you know, you know they talk about a welcoming classroom environment or a classroom environment conducive to learning and how you define that may very well be based in the evaluator’s perspective and sometimes when you do cross disciplines you are going to get some wacky results. If you have a math teacher who has certain

	<p>expectations about how students are going to do this and then how they are going to move to this and then move to this and there isn't that flexibility and then that person is all of a sudden doing a fine arts evaluation where that's just not the way the class flows then they're not going to be perceived as being a good teacher.</p>
<p><b>MISC</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: A1</b></p>	<p><b>Administrator: A2</b></p>
<p>I need to clarify something: Well, um OK, I read through that and I went—oh, you know, Um, you know... You know,</p> <p>Let me just throw this in, my pre-IB English classes have had to do that horrible career exploration thing...the person came into the theatre black box which is an unstructured classroom, my kids have been in there all year long, with lap desks and the whole thing and it took the teacher five minutes of gentle freaking out to understand that the students would be able to cope with her lecturing them on the career things, because she could not cope—and it was interesting to see an adult not be able to cope—could not cope with the unstructured set up in that classroom for the first five minutes. And I had to remind her, I said this is a class and they have been here all year--this just happened this week.</p> <p>That's right. Before that, I was all fine arts. Occasionally I would teach a mass communications class.</p> <p>No, I think I gave you all that I've been thinking about. I have two because I'm getting ready to retire and the new person is taking over all the theatre classes and I'm slowly taking</p>	<p>I went through a peer professional teaching act course as a teacher which really did help but wasn't specifically designed for that. <i>The first thing that you mentioned did you do that as a teacher?</i> I did that as a teacher. It was a professional development activity that a lot of teachers go through. <i>It was sponsored by the county?</i> Yes. <i>And did you do this as a teacher thinking that you would go into administration?</i> Nope. I just did it because C.C. (old principal) said your turn (laughs). <i>And she was your principal at the time?</i> Right. (MOVE THIS SECTION BACK TO TRAINING TO IMPLEMENT...)</p> <p>Can you clarify that question? I think that there needs to be... I can't of anything. Is there anything that really surprised you? For me, I've been dealt this process and I'm making the best of it and being at X University has been beneficial.</p>

<p>over and sharing the transition with him. Right. I teach theatre.</p>	
<p><b>Recognizing/Not Recognizing that the Arts are Different</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: A1</b></p>	<p><b>Administrator: A2</b></p>
	<p>And then classroom climate and safety and professional responsibilities again kind of go outside the instructional piece. Professional responsibilities is something where I tend to be able to give kudos to my fine arts folks a little bit more because there is so much collaboration and working with the community as a whole and interacting outside of the classroom and non-instructional duties and things like that so I tend to be able to give them some props there. <b>(DIFFERENTIATION UNRELATED JOB DESCRIPTIONS)</b></p> <p><i>So you went to them and said help me out folks?</i></p> <p>Yeah. When I first became and AP and was put in charge of English and fine arts and foreign language that is also a discipline that looks a little different—I went to each of the department heads at that point and said I want to create something an informal tool to use for walk-throughs for look fors. So what should I be looking for when I go into this type of classroom that would might be different than what I would look for in another type of classroom. So they gave me some pretty good feedback. We never formally adopted a specific tool or anything but they did a really good job of giving me some things that I should be looking for within the classroom—students working at different paces, students working in small groups with the teacher floating back and forth and that’s not all that unusual for me to see in a writing classroom so I was OK with that. You know the hardest part for</p>

	<p>me with theatre is how much space is necessary to do it and managing that space...that, as an administrator, makes me neurotic. Knowing that there are four groups out of your sight because they have to have that space to work because they can't be on top of each other--so that makes me crazy. So that's a red flag, too, but again it's something that I know has to happen it's just how well is that managed without giving up what is needed in terms of the instructional activities of the class.</p> <p>Yes, because otherwise the chaos issue would be an issue.</p> <p>Oh, absolutely. If someone came in here and just wanted to use the documents as they were and didn't care about how things would look different—you know, the beginning of a P.E. class looks horrendous. A theatre arts class can look crazy. So yeah, I think that if there is no concept of what that would look like it could definitely effect how you perceive the classroom environment.</p>
<p><b>Relationships and Effect on Evaluation</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: A1</b></p>	<p><b>Administrator: A2</b></p>
<p>Years ago, the band director and I had a slight run-in and we took it to our assistant principal. I was told in one of my evaluation, not the summative, but the observation, the prior form--that I needed to work on my relationships with the staff and faculty at the school. To which I took great offense because I was probably giving as good as I got; and try to deal with things one on one...however with the leaving with a couple of people, and not to blow my own horn—but the then the incredibly smooth-running of the performing arts and working with one another, the administration sat up and went, oh we see! And you know, time sometimes takes care of things. And sometimes you</p>	

<p>have to choose the hill in which to die.</p>	
<p><b>Unique Nature of Teaching Theatre</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: A1</b></p>	<p><b>Administrator: A2</b></p>
<p><i>You mean, this is a class as in a physical space class?</i>          Yes, the physical space, she couldn't cope. <i>So it didn't look like a regular classroom so she couldn't comprehend that this was a class because there was no chalkboard—</i>          Yes, exactly. And she just...if she were my evaluator, I'd be in trouble because she would not be able to comprehend what can happen in this space. Now the good thing is with the evaluators that do come in, particularly with your department head in fine arts, they move around with the students in this unstructured environment. They ask the students questions far more than they would in a core class—if it were an English class. They would sit observe and write. The good thing about a studio or practical classroom, the evaluator—if they are worth anything, and again, this depends on your evaluator, but in my case, what differs so much is that they get up and walk around and they ask the students what they are doing and what they are doing and what they have learned. Which I think is a far more effective way of evaluating any teacher—right across the board, even with core classes. I think you should be watching the teacher then you should have a moment, even in a structured classroom, to talk to the students. I think that's the biggest difference is the observers are getting up out of their seats, and walking, watching, talking to and in some cases, taking part in.</p> <p>When there was a change far more to addressing the needs of the special education students...um, we were all a</p>	

<p>little confused about that because we thought that we had been doing it all along. I think for a lot of the fine arts people, they had been! Because, as you well know, fine arts people can have half a dozen special education kids in a room together and there is never any collaborative teacher. So in a studio situation, or a performance situation, you have got to get those records and know exactly what you are dealing with. That would be when they started to emphasize that in the last few years, there was far more in-house education across the board for the teachers. But we just have to blindly make our way in many cases</p>	
<p><b>Unique Nature of Evaluating Theatre Teachers</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: A1</b></p>	<p><b>Administrator: A2</b></p>
<p>But it tends to fall apart for the fine arts people.</p> <p>She evaluates me as a theatre teacher. In fact, I don't get evaluated as an English teacher anymore at my request. It's like: the majority of <i>my</i> work is always in theatre, I will teach—you can come in and observe my English class, I don't have a problem with that—but I will not be evaluated based on that classroom. I said, it's not that in many ways—my class room management can be seen far clearer in an English classroom because it's a structured classroom. But I said, no, I want to be evaluated as a theatre teacher.</p> <p>I don't know. And again, there is no right or wrong. Now one thing that began two years ago, because we were jumping up and down and talking about it, is the in-service days to meet as a group of theatre teachers. And that is to have the theatre people meet together as one group. And we've actually had several meetings and they love it. And we put the middle schools theatre people in there as well—the western side of the county doesn't attend at</p>	<p>I also, when I first started doing the fine arts had some very frank conversations with the folks in there because I knew that I was out of my element a little bit. I got put in charge of fine arts because I had been in the band—so OK (laughs).</p>



<p>all; they are involved in a three-year study...of everybody working collaboratively...but the others come together and we've talked about the identity of all of us. And we've talked a lot about educating the administrators—not complain—but educating them, working to change the situation so that they understand us a group of professionals. We've talked about putting together a curriculum for theatre three, the curriculum for all of the middle school theatre—all in one day. We wrote the curriculum and the program description. We handed all of that in on the official forms and we now have a way for them to see what we do in terms of curriculum. They didn't have that for us. Education has got to stop promoting the incompetent to do the job. Promote the new person and then send them to study management principles. Time management is an issue.</p>	
<p><b>Disconnect Between Administrators/Theatre Teachers</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher: A1</b></p>	<p><b>Administrator: A2</b></p>
<p>I would say that <i>we</i> are our own evaluators. Certainly. As a master teacher, I'm pretty intuitive. I would say: hmm, the kids aren't getting this. And then I would say: let me try it this way. But for an evaluator to come in and watch me teach and say: why don't you try it this way? That wouldn't happen. They have no clue. Or even worse, they wouldn't even know what to suggest. My second year, it was the worst year. I remember going to my then-AP, who was not a suitable AP for the performing arts, because she just happened to be a very singular-task person. And she gets somebody like me who is thinking on five different levels at once and singing show tunes and just being...all over. Oh, and I have to do this, and oh I have to do that...and oh, by the way... and she couldn't cope with that kid of multi-</p>	

tasking. And I had a horrific, horrific class with one editing suit, one set of equipment, one camera, thirty-three kids in the class—it was obnoxious. And I went to her, not once, not twice, but five times in a year and each time she told me: give them worksheets. Now, if you keep that kind of AP in a position of authority over your fine arts people you are going to lose your fine arts people, you are going to have mismanagement up the wahzoo! These people are not on the same wave length—they don't even agree. You cannot give worksheets to a practical application style class. While you can certainly give them written work, a worksheet is not going to teach them what they need to know. Which I tried to explain, and finally the fifth time, I got up and said, you know what, never mind. I will now go and fix this myself. I will now go and fix this myself. And I limped through the rest of the year with this class.

About ten minutes then we would have to go to other meetings for English or whatever and we didn't really get to meet as a team of theatre educators. Those who teach English would say to me: well they told me...and I would say—no, you tell *them!* And we need APs who know how to listen—not talk, but listen. Even if they don't understand, if they learn to listen, they can learn the lingo and we can talk them. If you teach theatre well, then you will teach English extremely well. If they understand that, then they will understand how to work with us. Because we do know what we are doing!

Appendix K

Sample Member Check Response

Yes, I am sorry...I have received it...everything looks fine! Again, good luck!

*NAME REMOVED*

*Assistant Principal*

*NAME OF SCHOOL REMOVED*

*TELEPHONE NUMBER REMOVED*

EMAIL ADDRESS REMOVED

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**From:** S. Nowacek [mailto:s32602@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, June 02, 2008 9:00 PM  
**To:**  
**Cc:** Shelley Nowacek  
**Subject:** NAME REMOVED--did you get the member check I sent?

Hi NAME REMOVED

I really enjoyed the interview. Thank you again for allowing me to interview you--I know you are very busy. I was wondering if you got the member check? Sometimes an attachment will send an email straight to someone's junk folder. Let me know if that's the case and I'll send it again. Just look over it and if you would like to clarify or add anything, do so in another color font.

THANKS AGAIN!!  
Shelley Nowacek