

The Priority Given to Teacher Evaluation and the Impact on School Improvement, Professional Development and Student Learning

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Teacher Evaluation and Priority

- Strong organizational commitment is widely recognized in research and theory as a necessary element in the successful evaluation of teachers:
 - Commitment from district level administrators
 - Commitment from school level administrators



Research Regarding District Level Commitment

- A strong priority given to teacher evaluation is more important than the right form or procedure (Wise, Darling-Hammond, McLaughlin & Bernstein, 1984).
- Teacher evaluation is effective in districts where superintendents establish teacher evaluation as a priority (Binkley, 1995; McLaughlin & Pfeifer, 1988).
- Teacher evaluation is effective in districts where commitment is demonstrated in tangible ways (Stronge & Tucker, 1999).

Research Regarding School Level Commitment

- The success of a new teacher evaluation system is the result of the beliefs and practices of school leaders (Binkley, 1995; Davis, Pool & Mits-Cash, 2000).
- A school leader's visibility in the classroom is essential to enhance the professional development of a teacher evaluation system (Ovando, 2001).
- The commitment teacher evaluation receives sends a message about instructional priorities (McLaughlin & Pfeifer, 1988).



Purpose of the Study

- To examine how the priority given to teacher evaluation influences the impact of teacher evaluation on:
 - School improvement
 - Professional development
 - Student learning




Research Question

- To what extent does the priority given to teacher evaluation at the district level impact school improvement, professional development, and student learning?



Methodology- Research Design

- Both quantitative and qualitative data were used in a mixed method research design (Creswell, 2002) to determine the relationship between district priority on teacher evaluation and impact on school improvement, professional development, and student learning.




Methodology- Instruments

QUANTITATIVE

- Teacher Evaluation Profile (TEP) developed by Duke and Stiggans.

QUALITATIVE

- Interviews with personnel directors in 21 school districts.



Methodology- Data Analysis

ANOVA analyses were used to address the three null hypotheses examining whether or not a statistically significant difference existed in district priority and positive impact on:

- school improvement
- professional development
- student learning

Findings-

District Priority Codes

Based on analyses of interviews, districts were categorized with one of three codes:

- **High Priority** (n=3)- strategies are explicit in policy and practice and are applied system wide
- **Medium Priority** (n=8)- strategies exist, but are not applied consistently or throughout the district
- **Low Priority** (n=10)- administrators do not feel empowered to make changes that will enable teacher evaluation to be connected to practice

Findings- Participants

- Total of 3,627 teachers participated in the TEP survey from Northeastern North Carolina
 - High Priority Code 691 (19%)
 - Medium Priority Code 1805 (50%)
 - Low Priority Code 1131 (31%)

Findings- Priority and School Improvement

- ANOVA analysis was statistically significant.
- Means for impact of teacher evaluation on school improvement:
 - High Priority 3.35
 - Medium Priority 3.28
 - Low Priority 3.16

Findings- Priority and Professional Development

- Four ANOVA analyses were statistically significant.
- Means for impact of teacher evaluation on attitudes towards teaching:
 - High Priority 3.69
 - Medium Priority 3.51
 - Low Priority 3.52

Findings- Priority and Professional Development (cont.)

- Means for impact of teacher evaluation on teaching behaviors and strategies:
 - High Priority 3.58
 - Medium Priority 3.55
 - Low Priority 3.33

Findings- Priority and Professional Development (cont.)

- Means for impact of teacher evaluation on understanding the teaching-learning process:

<input type="checkbox"/> High Priority	3.52
<input type="checkbox"/> Medium Priority	3.36
<input type="checkbox"/> Low Priority	3.30

Findings- Priority and Professional Development (cont.)

- Means for impact of teacher evaluation on the quality of teachers:
 - High Priority 3.43
 - Medium Priority 3.40
 - Low Priority 3.26

Findings- Priority and Student Learning

Three ANOVA analyses were statistically significant.

- Means for impact of teacher evaluation on student learning:

- High Priority 3.36
- Medium Priority 3.21
- Low Priority 3.04

Findings- Priority and Student Learning (cont.)

- Means for impact of teacher evaluation on student achievement:

<input type="checkbox"/> High Priority	3.17
<input type="checkbox"/> Medium Priority	3.06
<input type="checkbox"/> Low Priority	2.86

Findings- Priority and Student Learning (cont.)

- Means for the extent to which student achievement data was used for evaluation purposes:

□ High Priority	3.41
□ Medium Priority	3.22
□ Low Priority	3.15



Conclusion One

- The priority given to teacher evaluation was directly related to teacher's perceptions of the impact of teacher evaluation on school improvement, professional development and student learning.

Conclusion One (con't)

- In high priority districts:
 - A strong commitment to change existed at all levels.
 - Alternative based systems were created that focused on teaching and learning.
 - Teacher evaluation was situated in the context of day to day efforts.
 - Resources were provided that would ensure teacher evaluation had a strong impact on teaching and learning processes.



Conclusion Two

- Formal processes need to be developed and monitored to insure that teacher evaluation impacts school improvement, professional development and student learning.

Conclusion Two (con't)

- In high priority districts:
 - District administrators had seen the need to change teacher evaluation practices.
 - District administrators understood their role in establishing connections.
 - District administrators sought to connect teacher evaluation with teaching and learning.
 - Administrators garnered strong commitment to teacher evaluation at all levels.

Implications

- Connections between teacher evaluation and school improvement, professional development, and student learning do not happen by chance.
- These connections require a significant effort on the part of all educators.
- District and school leaders need to insure that connections are developed and nurtured.
- Without clear intent and direction at the district level, teacher evaluation holds little promise to impact school improvement, professional development and student learning in a meaningful way.