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Areas of Concentration: A Practical Approach to the Improvement of Instruction

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AREAS OF CONCENTRATION:
A PRACTICAL APPROACH TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF INSTRUCTION

Presented to the
Graduate Faculty
University of Nebraska
at Omaha

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Specialist in Education.

University of Nebraska at Omaha

by

Larry T. Bock

March, 1978

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FIELD PROJECT ACCEPTANCE

Accepted for the Graduate Faculty, University of Nebraska,
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
Specialist in Education, University of Nebraska at Omaha.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Teaching in a rapidly changing society is a difficult and challenging profession. To cope with the social and technical changes of society, educators must constantly update curriculum and improve teaching techniques. The public is demanding that educators be accountable for the educational process. School boards are demanding more intense teacher evaluation.

The high school principal is responsible for the evaluation of the teaching staff. The most important objective of teacher evaluation is the improvement of instruction--all other aspects are secondary. The administrators need a process that is practical, effective, and contributes to the improvement of instruction.

Teacher evaluation is conducted in various ways. A common method of evaluating teachers is to use a check list and classroom teacher observations. On the check lists, items of concern are normally classroom functions, personal characteristics, and professional procedure. The evaluator, after observation and/or personal contact with the staff member, evaluates the staff member in each of these areas.

This method is the most widely used evaluation method at the present time.

Management by Objectives (MBO) was originally developed to work in the areas of business (1:85). It was brought into government by Robert McNamara, Secretary of Defense under President John Kennedy, to provide more efficiency in government agencies. Following the introduction of MBO into government, some educators have applied the concepts as a means of teacher evaluation.

Dr. Richard Manatte, has conducted extensive research with several school districts in developing a teacher evaluation program (2:12-13). His teacher evaluation program consists of a check list supplemented by Management by Objective procedures. The program is extremely time consuming when implemented with an entire faculty. In his work with the West Des Moines, Iowa, school district, about one third of the staff members were evaluated yearly using this method.

Dr. George Redfern advocates the use of "target setting" as the means for the evaluation and improvement of instruction (3:18). His method concentrates on a process of pre-conferences, visitation conferences, observations, and post conferences. Since teachers and administrators are involved in target setting conferences, pre-observation conferences, post observation conferences, and final

evaluation conferences, the amount of time required per staff member using Redfern's method is also considerable.

Generally speaking, many staff members are negative about the Management by Objectives approach. Dr. Robert C. Snider alludes to this problem in his March, 1977 article "Should Teachers Say No to MBO." (4:44). Similar arguments against MBO and the modification by Professor Manatte have developed in the West Des Moines, Iowa, School District.

To overcome many of the problems associated with programs designed to improve instruction, the Areas of Concentration (see Appendix A) concept was developed for the Blair, Nebraska, Public Schools. The Areas of Concentration concept is used to supplement the district teacher evaluation check list. By incorporating the Areas of Concentration concept with the check list, an evaluation program for the improvement of instruction appears possible.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Purpose:

It is the purpose of this study to assess the extent to which the Blair High School teachers accomplish their Areas of Concentration objectives and the perceptions they hold regarding the Areas of Concentration system.

Importance of the Study:

If high school administrators are to effectively work with teachers for the improvement of instruction, then the effectiveness of processes selected to achieve this goal must be assessed.

Delimitations:

This study will be limited to the expectations of teacher evaluation as it exists by board policy in the Blair Community School District. The process developed is one which is compatible to the evaluation program already established in the Blair Community School District. This paper will not deal with teacher evaluation per se, only that aspect which pertains to the process designed for the improvement of instruction.

Method:

1. The investigator will identify components of good teaching from the literature on teaching evaluation and teaching effectiveness.
2. The investigator will match the selected areas of concentration with the components of good teaching.
3. The investigator will develop a step by step checklist detailing the respective steps of the areas of concentration process.

4. The investigator will assess the perception of each teacher regarding satisfaction with the process.

CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The methods of evaluating teachers have evolved from practices related to certain movements in government, in industry, and in psychological research over the past century. Formal evaluation of teachers, as we know it today, appears to have its origin during the late nineteenth century and with the efficiency movement of the early twentieth century. At the turn of the twentieth century, 'scientific' management became very popular. The pioneering work of Frederick Winslow Taylor (5:43) in 1890 emphasized standardization, systematization, and stimulation which laid the foundation for "the efficient age". The practice of giving teachers numerical efficiency grades appeared in some large city school systems in the early 1900's as an outgrowth of the "efficiency age".

A score card developed in 1910 by E. C. Elliot, (5:47) was to become very popular. The card included seven headings entitled physical efficiency, moral-native efficiency, administrative efficiency, dynamic efficiency, projected efficiency, achieved efficiency, and social efficiency. Sub-items under each heading were assigned a maximum number of points and all points on the score card totaled 1000.

A landmark report on teacher rating in public schools

was compiled by A. E. Boyce (5:48) and published in 1915 by the National Society for the Study of Education. Boyce received replies from his survey of rating practices from 242 out of the 350 cities of over 10,000 population included in his sample. It appears that about sixty percent of the cities responding to the survey were using some type of rating or formal evaluation of teachers. The four most popular methods of determining teacher efficiency as reported by Boyce were: (1) a schedule of qualities on which teachers were judged, (2) efficiency grades for teachers, (3) no control over the judgment of teachers, and (4) promotional examinations. Of the qualities evaluated in sixty rating schemes, ninety-eight percent of the forms included "discipline". Next in frequency was "instructional skill" and "cooperation and loyalty," which appeared in sixty percent of the forms.

Boyce proposed a plan for rating teachers that included a list of forty-five items under five headings: personal equipment, social and professional equipment, school management, and technique of teaching. A graphic plan of checking each item on a scale of five terms ranging from very poor to excellent was proposed. Many forms still in use are quite similar to Boyce's "efficiency record" of 1915.

By 1925, three separate surveys reported to the N.E.A. (5:48-50) indicated that three-fourths of the large city

school systems were using some form of efficiency rating scales. The rating scale produced by Leroy A. King, University of Pennsylvania, produced the most detailed research. King found techniques (ninety-six percent) and personality (eighty-six percent) ranked the highest frequency of response of the items included.

A report by Reavis and Cooper (5:52-54) in 1945 of merit rating practices of 103 school systems stated that seventy-five percent were using a check scale; thirty-one percent a guided comment; twenty-four percent a characterization report; six percent a descriptive report; and one percent a ranking report. Reavis and Cooper advanced the theory that teacher ratings have value chiefly as measurements of a teacher's prestige and that other devices should be used to measure other aspects of teaching success. Observational records of classroom techniques were mentioned as a promising new development, although still dependent on mostly subjective reactions.

The N.E.A. Research Division (5:57-62) reported that by 1961, fifty-six percent of all districts reporting stated they used only one method of evaluating teachers while forty-four percent reported using two or more of the following methods of evaluation: (1) multiple factor check scales, (2) general factor check scales, (3) structured comments,

and (4) nonstructured comments. Still at issue in the early 1960's was the question of whether evaluation should concern itself with the teacher or the teaching. It was evident that, in practice, the teacher was evaluated.

Models for the evaluation of teachers are generally based on two premises: (1) that a sufficient body of research exists from which generalizations on good teaching and good teachers can be drawn, and (2) that classroom observational systems and other evaluative tools have been designed that will enable supervisors, peers, and students to systematically evaluate teachers in light of these findings.

Check lists and rating scales are by far the most commonly used observation procedures in use for measuring classroom behavior. The chief advantage of check lists and rating scales is that it permits the observer to consider suggestions from a number of sources before forming an opinion. A major flaw in the use of rating scales and check lists is the 'halo' or 'horn' effect. The tendency is to rate all persons high or all persons low. It is also difficult to differentiate in the middle range. In measuring out-of-classroom behavior information, it is usually easy to obtain but sometimes difficult to interpret. The author analyzed many evaluation instruments and the following examples of rating criteria were selected as representative:

(1) Rank Order Scale (specific)

- a. ability to communicate with pupils

Maximum ____: ____: ____: ____: ____: MINIMUM

(2) Rank Order (general)

- a. Professional responsibility

Maximum ____: ____: ____: ____: ____: MINIMUM

(3) Rank Order (over-all)

- a. Indicate your estimate of the services rendered by this teacher by placing a check in front of the most appropriate term. In making a judgment regarding the teacher, consider other teachers in comparable teaching situations in this school district.

____ A superior teacher

____ An above average teacher

____ An average teacher

____ A below average teacher

____ A well below average teacher

(4) Forced Distribution (Specific Area)

- a. Ability to communicate with pupils

Upper 10% next 20% mid 40% next 20% lowest 10%

(5) Absolute Categories (Flanders Interaction Analysis)

- a. The teacher gives the pupils detailed facts and information

____ Count number of times this occurs in fifteen minute period

(6) Verbal Descriptors

- a. The manner in which the teacher conducts the evaluation of pupil progress can best be described as:

continuous ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: erratic
 rational ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: irrational
 systematic ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___:
 disorganized

(7) Degree of Existence

- a. demonstrates a general personal interest in children:

always often occasionally seldom never

Factors that cause measurement problems include: prejudice, bias, poor judgment, inconsistency of reaction to behavior, subjective ratings and classifications, influence of the teacher's out of class personality on measurement of behavior in the classroom, too many classroom elements are measured at one time, and a tendency to continue a prior view of a teacher's performance.

In the Spring of 1976, the National Institute of Education (2:1) called for a new approach to the definition of effective teaching. By this time, competence and performance had become the basis for satisfactory completion of college teacher education programs. The feeling expressed by the National Institute of Education was that more focus needed to be placed on the teaching behaviors which indicated that

teaching was occurring.

This trend in renewed emphasis on teacher evaluation is summed up in a statement by Robert Olds, Vice President of Western Operations of the School Management Institute, Inc. (2:2)

A comparatively quiet but spectacular development in the states recently has been the enactment of laws and regulations requiring periodic evaluation of all teachers and other professional personnel in public school districts. One third of the states have taken this step, most of them during the past two or three years. Others seem certain to follow. Why the teacher-evaluation boom? The reason given invariably by legislators and other state officials is to improve education. School administrators and teachers also cite this as being the purposeful outcome of an evaluation program.

As a result of this type of concern, a great deal of importance has been placed on a new type of evaluation termed performance evaluation. The primary purpose of performance evaluation is for the purpose of improvement of instruction. This concept was alluded to earlier in the report by Reavis and Cooper (5:54). Dr. Guy Wagner (6:6) states "It cannot be overemphasized, however, that the most important reason for teachers evaluation is the improvement of instruction. All other reasons are secondary." George Redfern states (3:56) "The teacher and his appraiser should not waste time concentrating upon what is already being done well, but should focus on the areas of deficiency

which if corrected would raise the level of performance to a much high plain." Richard Manatte states (2:2) "The ultimate purpose for evaluating teachers is to enhance student achievement-...the idea is that by improving the performance of effectiveness of teachers we can attain our goal of improving education."

George Redfern (3:14) was one of the foremost leaders in the development of teacher evaluation for the purpose of improvement of instruction. Dr. Redfern looks at the major responsibilities of a teacher being in the following five areas: (1) classroom instruction, which includes basic preparation, knowledge of the material, and the instructional skills necessary to convey this information to the students, (2) consultation with individual pupils, which includes individual guidance and counseling and an overall empathic approach to the teacher student relationship, (3) effective communication between the teacher and student; teacher and parent; teacher and community, and teacher and fellow professionals, (4) professional participation, which includes the areas of curriculum building, development of instructional materials, and general educational concerns, and (5) self-criticism and analysis, which involves evaluation of one's own teaching, willingness to innovation, and the degree of attention to program and program needs.

Using these major areas of responsibility as a basis, Redfern advocates the development of performance targets to improve in areas of deficiency in each of these categories. The process advocated in his teacher performance program is for the teacher and principal jointly to establish performance "targets", (3:30-41) for the principal to work with the teacher in achieving these targets, for the teacher and principal to appraise the results of this performance, and for the teacher and principal to jointly prepare for the future. To achieve this program, it is necessary for the teacher and administrator to have a conference or conferences necessary to jointly establish the major targets. Both must agree upon the areas to be emphasized as well as the criteria to be used in appraising the teacher results. After the targets have been established, it is then necessary for the principal to make sufficient observations to effectively analyze the teacher's performance in the target areas. If the target area or areas are not observable, then the principal must confer with the teacher with the proper frequency so as to establish an understanding of the teacher's progress in this area. The observation process advocated by Redfern includes pre-conferences with the teacher, observation session, and post-conferences where the results of the observation are discussed. It is necessary to then confer with each staff

member so that planning for the future can be done.

Guy Wagner (6: 6-7, 38-39) has established eight components through which good teaching may be attained. These components are (1) empathy with children, (2) personal creativity, (3) effective utilization of materials, (4) planning and evaluating, (5) dedication, (6) desire to improve, (7) positive human relationships, and (8) highly satisfactory progress.

Selection Research Institute (7:1) identifies teacher themes inherent in "successful teachers". These are (1) empathy, (2) mission, (3) rapport drives, (4) individual perception, (5) listening, (6) investment, (7) input drives, (8) activation, (9) innovation, (10) gestalt (drive toward completeness), (11) objectivity, and (12) focus. The teacher themes derived by the Selection Research Institute were developed by researchers who collected information on the basic characteristics of teachers who had been identified as being outstanding teachers. The Selection Research Institute teacher themes are those themes which consistently appear as characteristics of teachers in this category.

In research of teacher performance since 1965, ISU researchers, under the direction of Richard Manatte, developed the following criteria for teacher evaluation: (2:3)

- A. Productive Teaching Techniques
 - 1. Clarity in presentation
 - 2. Variability in materials, activities, etc.
 - 3. Opportunity for pupils to learn materials on tests
 - 4. Use of student ideas
 - 5. Structuring comments used as advanced organizers
 - 6. Probing questions used for understanding of concepts, relationships and for feedback to the teacher
- B. Positive Interpersonal Relations
 - 1. Shows respect
 - 2. Amount of criticism (positive, encouraging, supportive)
 - 3. Tolerant
 - 4. Fair
 - 5. Available
 - 6. Provides opportunities for all pupils to experience
- C. Organized, Structure Class Management
 - 1. Businesslike or task-oriented behavior
 - 2. Difficulty of level of instruction appropriate for individuals

3. Uses class time efficiently
4. Constantly monitors pupil's progress and adjusts pace accordingly
5. Work is relevant and in sufficient amounts for depth learning
6. Has objectives and is teaching toward them

D. Intellectual Stimulation

1. Enthusiasm
2. Makes classwork interesting
3. Sustains pupil attention and response with activities appropriate to pupil's levels
4. The teacher is an exciting, vibrant person
5. The teacher inspires students to seek more knowledge on the subject
6. The teacher and pupils share in the enjoyment of humorous situations

E. Desirable Out-of-class Behavior

1. The teacher is a good team worker
2. The teacher reports pupil progress to parents in an effective manner
3. The teacher utilizes community resources in instruction
4. The teacher assumes responsibilities outside the classroom as they relate to school

5. The teacher is committed to the primary goal of assisting student growth
6. The teacher strives for improvement through positive participation in professional growth activities

Dr. Richard Manatte, (2: 76-83) in working with his "Evaluating and Improving Teacher Performance Program" has utilized the components of a check list evaluation system and the job targets approach similar to that developed by Redfern. In Manatte's program, teachers are evaluated on categories that are established empirically. Each is then required to develop between three and six performance improvement targets.

In Manatte's evaluating and improving teacher performance program, the categories and criteria of teacher performances which are statistically found discriminating are used to establish the check list portion of his evaluation system. The major thrust of his program is placed on his target setting portion of the program. This process of the performance cycle is designed to provide a sound basis for supervision as well as assurances for procedural due process. The steps required under this program are: (2:9)

1. Self-appraisal for familiarization and preparation for the post-conference,
2. Pre-observation conferences to discuss instructional objectives, methods and the learners,

3. Classroom observations--two or three periods per cycle,
4. Post-observation conferences to discuss critical classroom incidents, progress, and to exchange questions,
5. Agreement on a plan of action,
6. Time to improve, help to improve and mutual monitoring of change, and
7. Report of the summary evaluation to appraise and to superiors.

In establishing the rationale for job targets, Manatte's approach as used in the West Des Moines, Iowa, program was different than Redferns. (2:58-62) Manatte used a district wide needs assessment as the basis from which the job targets for the individual teacher would evolve. Once this base had been established, the target setting procedure began between the teacher and the administrator--using the items established from the needs assessment as the basis for establishing individual targets. Using the approach outlined above, approximately one third of the West Des Moines staff was evaluated each year.

Using this program, Manatte selected twenty-six teachers in the West Des Moines, Iowa, elementary schools. (2:12) Teachers worked in the area of mathematics--with their elementary students using criterion--references tests developed by Westinghouse Learning Corporation. It was found that by using this process, students in a community where

nine or ten months growth in nine months time is expected on the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills, the twenty-six classes averaged twenty-two months gain over all. It was also found that businesslike, structured, task oriented teachers had the greatest success with their students.

The advantages of both Manatte and Redfern's approach using the job targets is best summed in the following from Redfern: (3:57)

1. Long and short-term objectives of the educational enterprise can better become an integral part of the performance appraisal process
2. The job responsibilities of teachers provide the basis for setting individual performance targets. As a result of thinking through the interrelationships between the various aspects of the teacher's job, there is a more effective targeting of individual effort
3. The outstanding and poor performers receive primary attention, spotlighting those who may be eligible for promotion and those who will require considerable help, additional training, or even perhaps termination
4. Personality plays a much less important part of the final evaluation under the performance concept for the focus is on what the teacher does rather than what is thought of him as an individual. Thus, subjective criteria are replaced by objective ones
5. Performance appraisal tends to require both the appraisee and the appraiser to think hard about educational objectives, particularly long and short-term target and to work more diligently for accomplishment
6. The individual responsibilities of the teacher, as well as the administrator or supervisor, are brought into sharper focus

7. Practical work tasks are identified and concentrated upon. These are much more tangible and amendable to action than are the more subjective factors of other kinds of appraisals

The process of job targets as advocated by Redfern and Manatte has not been widely accepted by teachers. Robert C. Snider (4:44-46) has summed up some of the major objections that teachers have about this approach to improvement of instruction. The complaints as aired by Snider are:

1. Teachers often become scapegoats for all the shortcomings of public schools
2. Objectives can lead to a specialized type of behavior that causes the teacher to be very narrow in his scope and concerned only about the items in his job targets
3. The entire process is very time consuming for the teacher since a large amount of writing is necessary
4. Overemphasis on the objective sometimes stymies creativity and limits the range of educational goals which can be accomplished
5. Too often improper measuring devices are used which create uncertainty in the teachers mind as to when the objective has been satisfactorily achieved
6. Even Peter Drucker, the father of MBO and the dean of job management consultants, did not feel that this type of concept could be successfully used in the school setting
7. Too often the primary purpose of this type of approach is to save the school district some money rather than improve instruction
8. When goals and major objectives of a school system are established, it is questionable as to whether these are really the goals and objectives of the majority of the people within the school district

9. Too often teachers are held accountable for learning situations for which they either have no control or insufficient input into the process being used.

Redfern and Manatte have utilized the concept of Management by Objectives and applied it to education. The criticisms of this approach are evident. The Areas of Concentration concept is designed to overcome the major criticisms of performance type of evaluation.

CHAPTER III
AREAS OF CONCENTRATION PROGRAM

In developing the Areas of Concentration program, selected aspects of Manatte's program, Redfern's "target setting," and MBO were utilized. MBO promotes the concept of superordinate-subordinate working toward common goals. Redfern also adopted this concept to education in his "target setting" process. Manatte incorporated the "target setting" process with teacher performance criteria. Areas of Concentration combines the target setting, performance criteria, and MBO into a manageable process. It provides the teacher an opportunity to focus upon self-selected areas of development. It also enables the teacher to attend to other curricular needs, student needs, and the numerous operating needs of the school.

The Areas of Concentration program is illustrated in Appendix B. Each teacher is required to list two areas in which the teacher will place special emphasis during the ensuing school year. The first is an area of strength to be nurtured and extended for creative total personal development. A second area of concentration may be in an area of strength or an area of weakness. In either event, the teacher chooses any portion of personal educational development and develops these choices into Areas of Concentration.

This enables the teacher and administrator to concentrate in an area selected by the teacher and important to both. It encourages teachers to concentrate on their specific strengths and, yet, maintain sufficient flexibility to incorporate it into their unique programs.

The Areas of Concentration are listed and a plan is developed. This plan consists of the actual steps the teacher will use to accomplish the goals of the stated Areas of Concentration. This means that for each Area of Concentration, the teacher will state a goal that is feasible to attain. Each step in the plan must be part of a practical sequence used to accomplish the goal. The plan for the next year is given to the principal in June. This allows the administrator time to review it during the summer. It also provides the administrator opportunity to recommend ways of improving the plan and to converse with the instructor about goals, procedures, and value.

During the second year, as the principal engaged in teacher evaluation, the Areas of Concentration are used as a guide for working with the staff. By district policy, all teachers participate in the observation--conferences cycle once each semester. This provides the administrator the opportunity to work with all staff members and to aid all staff members in fulfilling their plan for the Areas of Concentration. Each teacher documents activities that

fulfill specific steps in the plan. When the instructor has completed the Areas of Concentration plan, the documented material is reviewed by the principal and then placed in the teacher's file along with the written evaluation.

The Blair, Nebraska High School principal and staff have been using the Areas of Concentration for two years. During this time, it has been discussed and reviewed by the faculty. After two years, is the Areas of Concentration contributing to the improvement of instruction and satisfaction of the instructional staff?

CHAPTER IV

THE STUDY

Components of good teaching have been identified by using information provided by Dr. Guy Wagner, (6:6-7, 38-39) by Selection Research Inc. (7:1), and by research done by Dr. Richard Manatte. (2:3) The components that are identified are common to all three of these studies. The following components have been identified for use in this study:

1. Empathy
2. Personal creativity
3. Input drive
4. Planning and Evaluating
5. Dedication
6. Gestalt
7. Rapport Drive
8. Highly Satisfactory Pupil Progress

These components represent areas of strength that teachers who are identified as outstanding teachers characteristically exhibit.

For this study each of these components is defined in the following manner. Empathy is defined as "anything that pertains to motivation with more attention" - discipline areas would apply here. Personal creativity includes activities that "exhibit the characteristics of innovative

practices." This deals with classroom instruction techniques and with course materials and content, but they would be ideas that are innovative in nature. The input drive is characterized by the use of additional materials--whether these be written materials, or films, or outside speakers; any areas where the teacher is using speakers, materials, and experiences to help improve the course. Next is planning and evaluating. Planning refers to people who restructure courses. This includes introduction of a new textbook where the entire course had to be modified, the introduction of an entirely new course, or a philosophical change from a teacher centered approach to more of a student centered approach. Also, anything dealing with evaluation including grades or breakdown of grades is included. Dedication is effort that goes over and beyond what would be expected of a teacher in his or her assignment. Next is gestalt which is defined by Selection Research as a "drive toward completeness." The teacher sees in patterns and is uneasy until work is finished. Rapport drive is anything that will "improve the student-teacher relationship." Some teachers did use areas which pertain to rapport with staff; however, these were computed in "other" since they pertain to staff rather than students. Rapport drive data pertained strictly to student-teacher relationships. Last, highly satisfactory pupil progress

refers to some type of work which "would show or which would be geared toward evidence of genuine interest in and enthusiasm for the school work, for work study habits, and for helping the student acquire various skills."

This researcher took the Areas of Concentration that were submitted at the end of the 1975-76 school year and to be developed during the 1976-77 school year and tallied these categorically into one of the eight identified areas. Forty-five teachers who submitted Areas of Concentration returned as staff members for the 1976-77 school year. Of these forty-five teachers, two teachers did Areas of Concentration on three items rather than the required two. Therefore, there are ninety-two areas in which the staff was concentrating. These ninety-two areas were divided in the following manner: three pertained to empathy, twenty-three pertained to personal creativity, twenty-six pertained to input drive, twenty-three pertained to planning and evaluating, three pertained to rapport drive, one to highly satisfactory pupil progress, none to dedication or gestalt, and thirteen areas were listed in the "other" category. These thirteen consisted mainly of areas in which people concentrated entirely on activities that were organizational in nature and did not satisfy the definitions of the other identified categories. Also, any of the areas that pertained to teacher rapport were listed in the "other"

category.

Appendix E illustrates the check list which details the steps in the Areas of Concentration process. The staff was oriented to the Areas of Concentration concept on April 15th at a regular teacher meeting. On May 28th, which was the last day of school for 1975-76, teachers submitted the written Areas of Concentration. These were reviewed by this administrator during the period of June 16th through June 30th. The teachers returned for inservice meetings the week prior to the start of school and on August 27th their Areas of Concentration were returned to them on oaktag cards to aid the teachers in documenting their progress. Ongoing observations, conferences, and help sessions were provided during the school year. This process was completed by the first of May in 1977.

At the end of the school year in 1977, the teachers were given a questionnaire (Appendix F). One hundred percent of the forty-five teachers responded to this questionnaire. Not all of the items reflect forty-five responses as some of the teachers did not respond to all areas. In response to Question #1, thirty-three teachers, which represents eighty percent of the staff, indicated that they had completed both of their project areas. In Question #2, part a, three teachers indicated that the Areas of Concentration project was very helpful. If these teachers had

not been working with Areas of Concentration, they would not have made progress or placed emphasis in this area. Their entire success in their selected area was due to Areas of Concentration. This consists of seven percent of the staff who participated in the Areas of Concentration program. In part b of Question #2, twenty-six staff members indicated that they felt they would have completed these particular areas anyway, but that the concept helped to reinforce their progress in this area. These twenty-six teachers constituted sixty percent of the staff. Another ten, twenty-three percent of the staff, responded that they would have completed these items anyway and that the concept did not help to reinforce their progress in this area. Four instructors, or nine percent of the staff, indicated that their Areas of Concentration had absolutely no value to them in their progress. Totally, then, sixty-seven percent of the staff indicated that this concept gave some help or much help, whereas thirty-two percent indicated the project had little or no value to them. The other one percent was mathematically lost as fractions of a percent.

The concept that the teachers had of the principal's use of the project indicated that six instructors (fifteen percent) felt the Areas of Concentration concept was extremely helpful to the principal in working with the staff, twenty-one teachers (fifty-one percent) indicated they felt

it would be moderately helpful to the principal in working with the staff, and fourteen staff members (thirty-four percent) indicated it would be slightly helpful to the principal in working with the staff. As far as receiving actual help from the principal, six of the teachers (thirteen percent) indicated they had received much help from the principal in working toward completion of their areas, twenty-eight teachers (sixty-two percent) indicated they had received some suggestions which were aids in completing their Areas of Concentration, while eight teachers (twenty-five percent) indicated they had received no suggestions from the principal which helped in the completion of their areas.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This investigator was able to identify components of good teaching by using related research by Dr. Manatte, Dr. Wagner, and from Selection Research. The eight areas were used by all three researchers and have been established on sound principles by these researchers. This investigator demonstrated that, even though the teachers could select their Areas of Concentration from any portion of education or any portion of their responsibilities in the educational field, of the ninety-two Areas of Concentration attempted by the staff members, seventy-nine (eighty-six percent) of the areas fell into one of the eight identified categories. This demonstrates that the major thrust and effort provided by the staff members was in areas that are defined as components of good teaching.

The step by step check list which was established projects a logical format for the implementation of the Areas of Concentration and also establishes documentation of the completion of these steps in the process. This check list is presented in Appendix E.

The results of the questionnaire that was distributed to the teachers indicates the vast majority of the teachers (eighty percent) were able to complete the areas which they had established and the plans that they had developed. To

assess the teacher's perceptions relative to satisfaction with the process, this study used three areas. One dealing with the teacher's perceptions as to how much the program helped them. Second, dealing with the teacher's perceptions as to the extent it helped the principal, and third, the teacher's perceptions of actual help the principal gave them. In all three of these areas, a majority of the teachers looked at the process in a positive manner. Sixty-seven percent of the teachers felt that the Areas of Concentration process was of some or much help to them in their work. Sixty-six percent of the teachers felt that this concept was either moderately or extremely valuable to the principal in working with the staff. In the final question, eighty-one percent of the teachers felt they had received some or many suggestions from the principal which aided in the completion of their Areas of Concentration.

In conclusion, this study did identify areas which are considered components of good teaching. This study shows that teachers, given the opportunity to select the areas from any portion of their educational responsibilities, will select a majority of the areas from teaching or educational areas which were identified as components of good teaching. The results also indicate that the teachers choose areas which relate more to the classroom, materials, subject matter, and technique portion of their teaching

responsibilities and relate less to the areas of rapport, empathy, dedication, gestalt, and highly satisfactory pupil progress.

Teachers in this study view the Areas of Concentration as a positive item both for themselves (sixty-seven percent) and for their administrator (sixty-six percent). Eighty-one percent of the teachers indicated this method aided the principal in providing instructional help. The study shows that the Areas of Concentration program is workable and is viewed positively by a majority of the staff. The study shows that efforts in the Areas of Concentration program correlate with the components of good teaching, that teachers view the program as a positive force in accomplishing their instructional goals, and that the program provides the principal an avenue through which instructional aid can be provided.

After completion of this study, several recommendations can be made. The author recommends that, for best results, the Areas of Concentration program be utilized with a maximum of thirty teachers. Further, it is recommended that continued study of the Areas of Concentration program be made in order to determine the correlation between teacher's organizational skills and their perceptions of the program. A third recommendation is to parallel this research with one investigating the entire evaluative

structure and as a result developing the check list type of teacher evaluation along with an improvement of instruction instrument. Finally, it is recommended that administrators, supervisors, and educators utilize the Areas of Concentration program as developed in this study, improve the concept, and continue research in this area so that the full potential of this concept might be realized.

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*APPENDIX A

AREAS OF CONCENTRATION

Develop study packets for specific writing problems for senior composition

Develop individual packets concentrating on the following areas for senior composition:

Develop class packets concentrating on the following areas for senior composition.

Student library assistant program

Assist teachers in the use of the library

Convert reading seminar from a pass-fail course to a graded course

Develop a method of getting more students involved sooner in all areas of technical theater for each production so more will learn and the job will be done by student help.

Develop a course of study for stagecraft

Develop more individualized instruction in Driver Education
Establish better discipline in P.E.

Reorganize journalism class to allow for more independent study and individual instruction

Expand the journalism program to cover activities outside of the classroom.

Make the classroom activities more practical. (That is: make the classroom activities and assignments in both marketing classes more closely like the actual experiences in a retail store.)

Increase the use of out of class resources.

*The Areas of Concentration are listed at random. However, in the final analysis, they will be placed in categories by the identified components of good teaching.

To encourage more personal involvement from each student within the various large group situations in vocal music

To work for better diction involving both correct pronunciation and clear enunciation.

To develop and utilize more comprehension objectives within System I using grade levels of comprehension.

To develop learning centers to give students additional practice on common areas of difficulty.

To try and find a new programmed text for General Math II

P.E. - Instrument and carry out a more thorough organizational pattern

Health - Instrument a greater variety in instructional material and methods

Extra curricular records

Reorganize grade system in Literature 7

Become more organized in Minority Cultures

Continue to become more organized in World Geography

Use better methods of preparing the students for learning their lesson

Use better teaching principles that will help students with learning problems learn more in my classes

Provide more variety in instructional techniques for Math 7

Provide a better organized classroom

Develop a more comprehensive writing program in English 10

Provide a differentiated classroom activity for English 10

Discipline

Units of teaching at highest level

Continue to look for new grammar exercises for French III text

Further improve the quality of student projects in Wildlife class

In that the new wildlife textbooks are a supplemental source rather than the primary area of study, I intend to make a course outline for the conservation of wildlife class.

Develop outside of school activities for seniors taking APB Adventures in American History

Concentrate on the area of individual attention in Math 8
 Concentrate on the area of organization in Math 8

Formation of 2 high school stage bands
 Expansion of parade formations

Improve method of instruction in Psychology
 Improve method of student evaluation and discipline

To improve on the work and texting schedule for Accounting
 III & IV
 Develop a program of supplementary projects for Accounting
 III & IV

Reorganize the cluster class in order to provide more
 career exposure
 Emphasize the credit unit in the Introduction to Business
 class

To help new incoming students become oriented to our school
 and acquainted with our policies and procedures.

Use more variety to involve students in history classes
 Try to bring current events into all history classes

In support of a complete office practice experience--addi-
 tional areas should be included in class learning
 opportunities.

The business cooperative stations and the advisory board
 are not being used to the fullest extent for the
 maximum benefit of the student

Don't like using packets as much as we've been using them.
 Will confer with advisory committee on this problem.
 Have had some students going to work at 1:00.

Change cluster format. At present business and health occ.
 split a group, taking each $\frac{1}{2}$ for $4\frac{1}{2}$ weeks.

Change last quarter for Co-op class with less first aid.
 Use Red cross format.

Organize individualized Microbiology course
 Prepare contract individualized program for ISCS III

Reorganize the carpentry and electrical course

Reorganize Spanish III
 Card file

Career opportunities in the science field - 8th grade
 Increase skills in science vocabulary - 8th grade
 Living notebook - or exhibit - Biology A
 Being sensitive to the needs of the students during the
 time a cadet is working with the students.

Revise the intermediate clothing curriculum for greater
 continuity throughout the high school clothing classes
 Develop a curriculum for the new Advanced Clothing course
 that will round out the clothing experiences offered
 to students in our high school.

Improve communication with students
 Improve communication with staff

Develop a program to provide students, who fail a unit
 exam, with an opportunity to take a second exam and
 achieve a passing mark
 Develop a program of applied mathematics in General Math I

Teach a section on insects (Science 7)
 Improvement of storage and checking out equipment

Reorganization of activities
 Gymnastics

Individualize English III
 Improve professional standing

Career Education
 Student evaluation and teacher involvement

Improve bulletin boards and display areas
 To provide a more interesting, workable program for grooming
 and clothing units.
 Cluster.

To develop more variety of instructional techniques for
 American History classes
 To continue to develop a strong program in the areas of
 psychology

Modify the Auto I Mechanics classes into a partial lecture/
 partial individualized instruction situation. Allowing
 for learning differences in students.
 Reconstruct the tests for the auto mechanics units

Organizational area of concentration for jr. hi band
Performing area

Create a slide reference library of crafts objects and
ceramics objects for the purpose of exposing students
to the work of artists as well as quality student work.
Stimulate more and better work from students in ceramic
class, develop a grading card for all students out-
lining requirements for all passing marks.

Develop a well-rounded 3-D program on jr. hi level
Outside resource use

Reorganize physics file
Reorganize chemistry file

APPENDIX B

STEPS IN AREAS OF CONCENTRATION

The program in Areas of Concentration consists of the following:

1. In the spring of the year each teacher must submit two areas in which they want to concentrate their efforts for the following school year. The areas are listed and the plan to accomplish the area is also stated.
2. The written Areas of Concentration are reviewed by the administrator during the summer months when more time is available to do this. The administrator then checks with staff members as needed to either revise or clarify any of the areas.
3. In establishing the Area of Concentration one of the areas must be in an area of strength, the second area may be in the area of a strength or a weakness. Most of the teachers decide whether they will concentrate on two strengths or one strength and one weakness. In certain cases this administrator has required the teacher to work in an area of weakness. This is done when this weak area is affecting the overall performance of the teacher.
4. When the teachers return in the fall of the year, the format for the Areas of Concentration is established and teachers are ready to proceed with their plan.
5. Observations and conferences are held with each staff member once each semester-minimum. Through the course of the school year, most teachers have been visited six times and conferenced twice formally and once informally. Through the observations and conferences, sufficient monitorings of the teacher's progress in their two areas is accomplished.

6. All the Areas of Concentration for each teacher are typed on an oaktag card with space allowed for documentation. In the spring of the year the teachers turn these cards into the office in their completed form. The administrator reviews these cards, and then the cards are placed in the teacher's permanent file. This serves as a documented record of the teacher's ability to perform in specific areas.

APPENDIX C
PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Plan Development

1. Self generated
2. Directly related to assignment
3. Written in instructional terms
(means that the teacher will do something)
4. Action plan
5. How do you evaluate
(product or process oriented)
6. Specific time span

APPENDIX D

SAMPLE AREA OF CONCENTRATION WITH DEVELOPED PLAN

Create a year of instruction to supplement already existing agriculture courses in the areas of personal development and the management of the student's supervised occupational experience program.

1. To allow the students the opportunity of developing a curriculum topic list to supplement areas of concern in agriculture.
2. To instruct students in the correct process of record-keeping that is specific to agriculture or agribusiness.
3. To train students in the areas of leadership that are going to be expected of them in agribusiness or agriculture employment.
4. To demonstrate the correct usage of parliamentary procedure in private or public meetings.
5. To explain and demonstrate how agribusiness or agriculture techniques, skills, and knowledge can be orally and physically demonstrated to an audience or any composition.
6. To describe for students the correct manner in which to prepare an extemporaneous or public speech and require a demonstration of competency in these areas by students.

APPENDIX E

CHECK LIST IN AREAS OF CONCENTRATION

- _____ #1 Principal introduces the concept to the staff
- _____ #2 The teachers submit their Areas of Concentration to the principal
- _____ #3 The principal reviews the Areas of Concentration
- _____ #4 Areas of Concentration are returned to the staff members
- _____ #5 The Areas of Concentration are implemented
- _____ #6 The Areas of Concentration are reviewed and updated
- _____ #7 The Areas of Concentration are completed

APPENDIX F

QUESTIONNAIRE ON AREAS OF CONCENTRATION

1. Did you complete both of your project areas?
 Yes (33-80%) No (8, 20%)

2. The Areas of Concentration project was (select one)
 - a. very helpful (3-7%)
 - b. Items I would have completed anyway; but the concept helped to reinforce my progress in this area (26-60%)
 - c. Items I would have completed anyway, but the concept did not help to reinforce my progress in this area (10-23%)
 - d. Absolutely no value (4-9%)

3. This concept is (circle)

extremely (6-15%)	
moderately (21-51%)	valuable as a tool in helping
slightly (14-34%)	the principal

4. I received (circle)

many (6-13%)	suggestions from the principal which
some (28-62%)	aided in the completion of my Areas
no (8-25%)	of Concentration