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An Appraisal of the Revised Procedure for Teacher Evaluation in the Woodbine Public High School

Patrick W. Morgan

University of Nebraska at Omaha

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AN APPRAISAL OF THE REVISED PROCEDURE FOR
TEACHER EVALUATION IN THE WOODBINE PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL

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

Patrick W. Morgan

July 19, 1984

UMI Number: EP74129

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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.

Supervisory Committee

Name	Department
<u>Edward J. Jader</u>	<u>TED</u>
<u>Paul Kennedy</u>	<u>Ed Adm. & Sup.</u>
<u>Janell Kocian</u> Chairman	

Date 7-19-84

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
I. INTRODUCTION	1
The Problem	5
Delimitations	6
Related Literature	6
Methodology	7
Definitions of Terms	8
Organization of the Project	9
II. RELATED LITERATURE	10
Goals of Teacher Evaluation	11
Establishing a Teacher Evaluation Program	13
Criteria for Teacher Evaluation	23
III. WOODBINE'S APPROACH TO TEACHER EVALUATION	33
Specified Written Procedures	33
Administrative Directive	35
Report Forms and Logs	36
Procedure Used to Evaluate a Teacher	37
IV. PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS	40
V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	44
Summary	44
Conclusion	45
Recommendations	46
VI. BIBLIOGRAPHY	50
VII. APPENDIX	52

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

The Public has long expressed a desire to improve education. In the past year there have been several reports such as A Nation at Risk and High School: An Agenda for Action, indicating various problem areas that need the attention of the public and educators nation wide. These reports have been submitted by federal and state commissions, education committees, and "knowledgable" individuals. The areas of concern and the recommendations include additional funding for salaries, supplies, materials, curriculum revision, higher standards of achievement, lengthening the school day and the school year, as well as other suggestions and ideas. Among the recommendations set forth are forms of merit pay for teachers. However, little mention is made regarding how to evaluate and identify meritorious teachers. A realistic alternative may be "on the job" teacher evaluation. Evaluation is defined by Webster's Dictionary as "an estimated worth."¹ Teach is defined as "imparting knowledge"² and teacher is defined as "one who instructs".³ The three combined could be then defined as estimating the worth of one who instructs.

Teacher evaluation is important to the improvement of instruction by serving a two-fold purpose. Most importantly it provides teachers information about their teaching. It

assists teachers in recognizing their strengths and weaknesses, so that the former may be capitalized upon and the latter properly addressed. Second, it serves to quantify teaching performance for the purpose of promotion, reappointment, or non-renewal.

The problems associated with teacher evaluation are almost limitless. The topic is clouded with opinions, subjective judgments, and myths. Consequently, the people most involved in the evaluation process, the teachers and supervisors, are often reluctant to initiate and accomplish the needed appraisals. Examples of this reluctance or fear of evaluation is indicated by Natriello when he stated "many supervisors are unsure of how, when and where to perform meaningful evaluations. Increasing pressure for accountability in education had led to the development of formal systems for the evaluation of teachers at all levels. Many administrators are untrained in the evaluation procedures and relatively unprepared to add the task of systematic evaluation to an already overflowing schedule."⁴ Savage supported the above statement with one of his own when he said, "the sad fact of the matter is that too many principals are unable and/or unwilling to devote the time necessary to conduct a thorough teacher evaluation that involves classroom observation."⁵ The following authorities illustrate the problems facing the development of a realistic teacher evaluation system. "Faculty evaluation is the bane

of many principals. A myriad of evaluation styles are in use; many more have been discarded."⁶ From the teachers' side of the situation comes "teachers in general held very negative, even hostile, attitudes toward the idea of performance evaluation."⁷

It is apparent that teacher evaluation is constantly running into opposition from both sides of the spectrum, the evaluator and the evaluatee. Both groups seem to fear the process as well as not understand it. Thomas Petrie, in an article in the NASSP Bulletin stated that there are some myths, each containing some truth, that need clarified:

1. Each teacher is unique and has an individual way of getting results.
2. Teaching is an art.
3. Evaluation and supervision are incompatible.
4. Teachers cannot interpret objective data.
5. Teachers do not like evaluations.
6. Supervisors can judge the quality of instruction without classroom observation.
7. The smiles on their faces tell me everything I need to know.
8. Supervisors must find things needing improvement.
9. Teachers and supervisors do a lot of intangible good that cannot be measured.⁸

These and other myths leave the profession with little consensus about the worth of evaluation. However, "despite claims by some that teacher performance cannot be measured, the good teacher can be differentiated from the poor teacher

and teachers can be evaluated on an ongoing basis through informal, covert systems if not through a formally defined process."⁹ While, there is some teacher evaluation going on in education, it is not universally productive. In research conducted by Natriello and Dornbusch, several findings were reported:

1. In general, teachers reported that evaluations were communicated infrequently.
2. On the average, they received formal evaluations from their principals every three years.
3. Principals believed themselves to be communicating evaluations much more frequently than teachers reported receiving them.
4. Principals reported communicating dissatisfaction far more than teachers reported receiving negative evaluations from principals.
5. A principal may think he is communicating evaluations frequently, any one teacher will receive them less frequently.¹⁰

School district administrators are obligated to evaluate their staffs. Many administrators admit that their methods need improvement. An example cited by Blecke is "Archaic examples of teaching techniques used on evaluation instruments -- 'colorful use of bulletin boards' and 'blinds or shades drawn in a systematic manner'."¹¹

The need for teacher evaluation is sufficiently evident for all supervisors to realize the need to assess staff strengths and weaknesses. The crux of the matter is that many programs used to accomplish this do not accomplish

the objective, but tend to waste teacher and administrator time, as well as, school resources.

THE PROBLEM

In the past year the Woodbine School District has revised its policy on the evaluation procedures of its instructional staff. The previous method called for the teaching staff to be formally evaluated by the building principal a minimum of three times each year for first and second year teachers and two times for teachers with three years and beyond. Each of these evaluations was to be based on several observations by the principal.

The current format prescribes much the same procedure to be followed as in past years. The essential change is in the minimum number of formal evaluations to be used, (the teachers will be evaluated a minimum of two times each year for first and second year teachers and one time for all teachers beyond the second year), additionally, the rating scale and the characteristics or items to be evaluated are somewhat different on the final evaluation instrument.

The change in the evaluation procedure came about at the request of both the administration and the teachers' association. Both groups felt that for the amount of time being used, the previous method was not accomplishing as much as it should. Both parties were reluctant to go

through the procedures because of the time and often repetitious material that was gained from the evaluations and observations. As the program is initiated in the Woodbine Public Schools, the process will itself need to be evaluated.

The purpose of the study was to examine the current evaluation procedures of Woodbine Schools to determine if the methods being utilized are those recommended by authorities in the field.

DELIMITATIONS

The project was limited to the new evaluation instrument and practices being employed by the Woodbine School District. It included the observation and evaluation forms, the required frequency of observing and reporting and all other practices and procedures prescribed by the school district's policies. The time allowed for the research was limited by the parameters set by the district's policy and the limitations set by this field project, primarily the 1983-84 school year.

RELATED LITERATURE

In the chapter dealing with related literature, the various goals and objectives of teacher evaluation will be identified and described. The study reviewed and elaborated on the identified authors' prescriptions of what teacher evaluation is supposed to accomplish. Examples of

these types of recommendations will include improvement of instruction and aiding in the decision making process with regard to promotion, granting of tenure or dismissal.

The identification of criteria on which to base these goals and objectives will be the second purpose. Recommendations of the various authors will be identified to determine what skills and abilities a supervisor should be looking for in their instructional staff. Examples of the various criteria are in the general areas of instructional skill, communication, organization, personal appearance and rapport with others.

METHODOLOGY

1. From the review and synthesis of the related literature, the study identified recommended criteria for a quality teacher evaluation system.

2. The study contrasted the Woodbine Public School's evaluation system with these identified criteria.

3. This step includes documentation of how the Woodbine Public Schools' evaluation system compared with the recommended criteria for a program of teacher evaluation.

4. The final step assessed the extent that the Woodbine Schools' evaluation system enabled the evaluator to make decisions about the criteria identified from related literature.

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Accountability: to be held responsible for the duties of teaching; includes preparation, organization, instructional skills, behavior and management.

Administrator: the person to whom responsibility is given to manage the designated area of the school, in this instance the building principal.

Evaluation: an estimation of performance abilities of a teacher with regard to educational competencies (examples: questioning, lecturing, organization, classroom management).

Evaluation Instrument: the prepared form used to aid in identifying the competencies of teachers.

Evaluator: the person doing the evaluation, in this study the person is the building principal.

Improvement: to become better.

Observation: the action of the principal where he/she assesses the actions of the teacher in a given singular situation.

Supervision: the act of overseeing an area of responsibility.

Teacher: one who instructs.

Teacher Agreement or Teacher Contract: the negotiated agreement between the school district and the teachers' bargaining organization.

Termination: to end the employment of a person.

ORGANIZATION OF THE PROJECT

- Chapter I - Introduction
- Chapter II - Related Literature
- Chapter III - Woodbine's Approach to Teacher Evaluation
- Chapter IV - Presentation of Findings
- Chapter V - Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

CHAPTER TWO
RELATED LITERATURE

In reviewing the literature about teacher evaluation, it is quite apparent that there has been a great deal of research on the subject. Reasons given for the amount of research range from the desire to dismiss "Incompetent" teachers to the need to promote and increase the pay of "good" teachers. In the middle of dismissal and promotion stands the area that many teachers profess needs the most attention; that being to improve the instructional level of all teachers. The assumption of many that teaching is the most important determinant of a student's success is very close to being correct. "Studies have shown that what the teacher does is the second most powerful indicator of student achievement and that what the student knows prior to entering class is the most powerful predictor of how much he or she will learn."¹² We cannot control what students will know when they enter a particular teacher's classroom, but there are some methods available to us to help insure that there is quality instruction that takes place once they are in the classroom. The method discussed in this chapter is that of teacher evaluation. The author intends to identify goals and objectives that various researchers and experts in the area consider to be essential to a quality teacher evaluation procedure, cover methods of developing an evaluation system, and then give various criteria for teacher evaluation.

GOALS OF TEACHER EVALUATION

When discussing the various goals that the authors identify, two primary goals kept appearing in the literature. These were the two that were designated by David Larson in his article for the NASSP Bulletin. Staff evaluation should "improve and maintain good instructional skills and identify unsatisfactory performance within the staff."¹³ He went on to state that the bottom line of the evaluation program should be to "help teachers to get better or to help teachers to get out."¹⁴ Two other authors felt that there should be four goals in a teacher evaluation system, these being "1) assess the overall school program, 2) provide a basis for improving instruction, 3) motivate teachers to render their highest level of professional service and 4) provide a basis for making administrative decisions."¹⁵ Hansen in 1978 cited eight goals that he felt were needed when conducting teacher evaluations;

- 1). Improving teacher performance and behavior.
- 2). Improving school and classroom climate.
- 3). Enhancing student learning.
- 4). Maximizing professional capabilities.
- 5). Assessing innovation and curricular implementation.
- 6). Quantifying program and instructional programs.
- 7). Implementing accountability.
- 8). Determining retention and dismissal.¹⁶

Kimball in 1980 stated that the first purpose of teacher evaluation should be to "improve the quality of instruction; and second, to provide a basis for personnel decisions regarding the retention and dismissal of teachers."¹⁷

It is apparent that teacher evaluation is felt to be a very important function within a school district. Most of the authors agree that the primary purpose of improving instruction is met if there is a meaningful and realistic evaluation program used in that particular school district.

ESTABLISHING A TEACHER EVALUATION PROGRAM

One of the best formats found for the establishment of a teacher evaluation system, in the opinion of the author, was detailed by Donovan and Katheryn Peterson for the NASSP Journal in February of 1984. The Petersons felt that there needed to be an understanding by both the administrators (evaluators) and the teachers (evaluatees) of the various terms listed below:

Due Process: There is a need for established rules and for each party to understand and to follow these rules for the protection of all those concerned.

Discrimination: Since the U.S. Constitution guarantees that no citizen can be discriminated against for beliefs, associates, or personal characteristics, the only evaluation criteria that are directly job related may be legally applied. Court cases have found that various tests, interview techniques, and evaluation systems used for selection, promotion, and retention are racially, culturally and sexually biased.

Validity: Evaluation must measure the attributes it purports to measure.

Reliability: The authors felt that the courts are concerned that teachers not be discharged without documented evidence from qualified evaluators. They felt that there were two major concerns involved in establishing reliability:

- 1.) "To what degree can two or more persons observe the same teacher at the same point in time and independently draw the same conclusions; and
- 2.) To what degree can this be done in varying contexts over time?"¹⁸

High/Low Inference Variables: Inference depends upon the amount of judgment the observer must apply to determine the presence, absence, or quality of a phenomenon (Borich, 1977). Examples used to indicate large amounts of judgment were "warmth" and "enthusiasm" which would be high inference variables. An example of a low inference verbal behavior is "specification of objectives" which the authors felt could be detected with reasonable accuracy by a trained observer who could tell when a teacher had specific objectives.

Representative Observation of Teacher Performance:

"Evaluation systems need to be comprehensive and include a wide range of validated variables that can be applied to a wide variety of contexts and levels."¹⁹

This statement is taken to mean that when a teacher is being evaluated, the evaluation should be based on observations of what the teacher has done in the classroom that is directly involved in the educational process.

Researched/Valued Variables: The selection of variables to be observed and reported on is felt by the authors of this process to be one of the first decisions to be made

when developing a teacher evaluation system. They felt that these teacher evaluation systems should be based on researched teacher behaviors that can be linked to student outcomes.

Numbers and Kinds of Instruments: It is felt that there is no one evaluation instrument that could include all the potential behaviors that are worthy of observation for the purpose of evaluation. Four types of observation methods that are identified are

1. Naturalistic inquiry which has the observer recording what he or she saw using nothing that would have been predetermined to be seen, heard, or recorded.
2. Sign systems which are based on a number of items identified by research which are checked off a check list if they are observed. These do not provide a method of recording how often these behaviors occur.
3. Category systems provide both sequence and frequency, but since observations are made on a timed basis, the number of items that can be observed are limited.
4. Rating scales are used when quality judgments must be made. "Frequently the only instrument used for evaluating is a summative rating scale".²⁰

The Petersons recommend that if a district is going to increase the number of instruments to be used for teacher evaluation, then that district should

1. Develop or select instruments that are researched based and fit into the total evaluation system of the dis-

trict. 2. Select the type of data collection system that fits the context and purpose of the evaluation.

3. Be certain the instruments are validated before they are used for the decision-making purposes.

Number and Length of Observations: "Preferable practice is to arrange short appraisal periods that incorporate a series of interrelated lessons into a teaching unit" (Borich, 1977)²¹ All aspects of a teacher's performance should be observed and evaluated.

Context of Evaluation: Context factors that affect instruction were teachers, subject being taught, students, and classrooms. These all can have an effect on how well a teacher is performing. The authors feel that evaluation techniques should measure knowledge of subject matter and pedagogical skill, but remain neutral with regard to teaching styles.

Who Should Evaluate: The person/persons should first of all be adequately trained to do so. The Petersons feel that there are three levels of teacher evaluation.

1. Self-evaluation where the teacher learns the variables being evaluated, their definitions, and examples that constitute clinical teaching and practice them.
2. Peer evaluation which is much the same as item No. 1 in regard to learning what is to be evaluated only with this type, one person observes another's teaching and counsels that person on improvement.
3. Supervisory

evaluation where the teacher evaluation is done by the teacher's supervisor (department head, principal, assistant principal). Once again the evaluator must be knowledgeable of what is to be accomplished and how it is to be done.

Levels of Evaluation: A three level approach is suggested to evaluate the teaching staff because of the differences in the make-up of a teaching staff. The first level applies to experienced teachers who are doing a good job. These teachers should be engaged in self and peer evaluations for the purpose of improving instruction. This should go hand in hand with an annual conference with the supervisor to review past work and to discuss future goals. Level two is to be used for new teachers, experienced teachers who have new assignments, a sample of those teachers from level one, and those teachers that are identified as needing improvement. This level of evaluation should be formative in nature with the goal being to first determine if improvement is needed, to identify the particular problem, and then indicate to the teacher what must be done to remediate the problem. Level two evaluations require several observations. Level three is summative in nature and is used only when that teacher is judged to be incompetent. Documentation at this point is extremely important and evidence must be shown that the teacher will not or cannot change the undesirable behavior. The outcome of

this level is generally dismissal or reassignment.

The following guidelines were given by the Petersons to consider when developing a teacher evaluation system.

1. Only performance that teachers can control (i.e. their own behavior) should be summatively evaluated.
2. Items in the evaluation system should stem from researched performance that directly relates to student learning, rather than items chosen only because they are valued, such as consensus based upon group opinion.
3. Groups of performances (examples are how instruction is organized and managed) must be identified, classified, and defined, and examples must be given to clarify the basis on which evaluations are to occur.
4. Instruments designed to detect and record teacher performance must be developed and validated, and observers trained and tested for reliability.
5. Formative evaluation should result from observations scheduled during significant periods of extended teaching; e.g., during the period of a unit or sequence of instruction.
6. Summative evaluation must be based on a representative sample of teacher performance and, where resources are adequate, should be the end result of a series of formative evaluations.

In an article by Richard Larson, it was stated that the development of a teacher evaluation system should "be a cooperative effort involving teachers, administrators,

and school board members. Cooperation is necessary for the following reasons:

1. So the educational standards and community expectations can be established;
2. When teachers are involved they are more committed to the procedures, know what is expected, and know what will be evaluated;
3. The teachers' union, especially the leadership, will be less likely to challenge a termination and will support the concept of helping teachers to improve performance through evaluation;
4. School board members as well as community members will be more knowledgeable about the purpose and process of evaluation and will provide the necessary support for administrators to effectively implement the evaluation system; and
5. Principals will operate more confidently, understanding that the evaluation system has the support of all parties concerned, especially the teaching staff."²²

Larson went on to state that he felt that an evaluation system should include a philosophy or a statement of beliefs that establishes the foundation of the evaluation system. These statements of philosophy should contain an assertion that the primary purpose is to improve instruction. A statement of objectives should also be included

that indicates the aims of the evaluation system and should be directly related to the philosophy. Those who are going to do the evaluation as well as the procedures for evaluation need to be identified. Larson feels that in the area of procedures, each teacher should be placed in one of three tracks for the purpose of evaluation. These tracks are: Track one - probationary for a period of two years and formally evaluated three times a year during those two years. Track two - these teachers have been employed in the district for more than two years and their performance is generally considered satisfactory by the principal. These teachers are evaluated at least once every three years. Track three - the people in this category are considered to be those that are in need of extensive assistance and need to improve in order to meet district standards. These teachers are evaluated about three times a year for up to two years. If adequate improvement is not noticed and documented, then action is started to terminate the teacher. The evaluation criteria should be spelled out and "developed by reaching a consensus among teachers, administrators, and board members as to what constitutes a good or effective teacher."²³ These criteria should be valid and reliable.

Another key area that should be covered is the classroom observation procedures. This requires the principal and the teacher to agree prior to the observation about what is to be accomplished in a lesson and how such accom-

plishment is to be measured. The final area is for the principal and the teacher to set job improvement targets. The purpose of this is to "help the teacher to develop a plan for professional, personal, and/or instructional improvement; assist the teachers in overcoming a weakness and improving performance to meet district standards; demonstrate that the school district has made a reasonable documented effort to assist the teacher improving performance prior to initiating dismissal proceedings; and provide a means for the school district to achieve organizational goals compatible with individual teacher goals."²⁴

Robert A. Garawski in an article for the N.A.S.S.P. Journal in March of 1980 gave some guidelines to be considered in dealing with the subject of teacher evaluation. He felt that the administrators could use these as benchmarks to effect "meaningful evaluation with resultant change."²⁵

"Guideline 1: The administrator must be personally committed to the idea that teacher evaluation should be a shared process.

Guideline 2: Teacher evaluation must be considered a formative process.

Guideline 3: Evaluation must be implemented as a mutual process between teaching staff and evaluator.

Guideline 4: The evaluation process should offer teachers the opportunity to reflect, in depth, upon their personal educational tenets and to compare them with their actual classroom practices.

Guideline 5: Never underestimate the power of positive reinforcement.

Guideline 6: Growth is a necessary ingredient of all educational programs and staff members must be aided in recognizing its ongoing importance.

Guideline 7: The administrator must be thoroughly prepared to carry out the evaluation process.

Guideline 8: The evaluation process should be clearly conveyed to the teacher along with any expectations.

Guideline 9: Do not expect miracles."²⁶

Other procedures that were identified by Manatt in 1976 led to questions such as:

When will the evaluations take place? How often?

Are there to be pre-visit or post visit conferences?

Are the visits announced?

Does the teacher know specifically what will be evaluated?

Does the teacher know what will happen if the evaluator views the performance to be unsatisfactory?

Who will do the evaluating: The principal? Assistant principal? Department chairpersons? Colleagues? Students?

If the teacher evaluation system to be used is well planned and organized, it can be a tremendous asset in upgrading district teaching performance. An evaluation system that is poorly planned, unilaterally determined, poorly communicated and inadequately understood can severely hurt the morale and the teaching performance in the given school district.

CRITERIA FOR TEACHER EVALUATION

Earlier in this paper it was indicated that there were three types of teacher evaluation with regard to who would be doing the evaluation. The three were: 1.) self-evaluation, 2.) peer evaluation, and 3.) supervisory evaluation. Once it has been determined as to the method/methods to be used, the decision should be made as to the overall format to be used. Does the district wish to use one of the four types indicated by the Petersons which included naturalistic inquiry, sign systems, a category system, rating scales, or combination of them? The other areas to be dealt with in the early stages were indicated in the section of this paper dealing with that of establishing a teacher evaluation system. When those are accomplished to the satisfaction of the majority, the school district can get to the specifics of what is to be evaluated with regard to the teaching staff. This is what will be dealt with in this section of the field project.

It has been indicated by several authors (Petrie, Mooney, and Manatt) that the interrelationships between the evaluator and the evaluatee with regard to a particular observation/evaluation be based on: 1.) a pre-classroom visit conference, 2.) the classroom visit and 3.) the post-classroom visit conference. During the first part of this contact there should be the ground rules set for what is to be observed with regard to the objectives of this particular class. Other mutual agreements should be made

about time to observe the class, time to meet for the post-classroom visit and any other details. With regard to the classroom visit, Mooney gives four rules a supervisor should follow during the classroom observation. They are:

1. Arrive before the start of the lesson and remain until the end.
2. Greet the teacher in a friendly manner.
3. Take a seat that makes you unobtrusive
4. Do not participate in the lesson.

The post-classroom visit conference according to Mooney should have the following characteristics: be a relaxed atmosphere, concentrate on the objectives mutually agreed upon, let the teacher talk, be positive, suggest resources that will aid improvement, and mutually plan future supervisory activities. Mooney also suggests that the teacher be asked if the supervisory process actually helped him or her. This is all concluded with a written report to the teacher with an invitation to discuss its contents.

Gerald D. Bailey gives the following criteria for teacher evaluation and diagnosing and analyzing various teaching styles. He calls his system the Methodology-Strategy-Technique Classification System. The major methodologies include:

Lecture: a process of telling, explaining, or showing information to students for the purpose of imparting subject matter information.

Inquiry: an activity which involves evaluating information to arrive at specific conclusions. Open mindedness and problem solving skills are essential attributes in inquiry teaching and learning.

Gaming/Simulation: an activity involving players in a situation with specific rules and conditions. Resolution conflict or solving problems in a life-like situation results in a conclusion or outcome.

Small-Group Instruction: a process of allowing a smaller number of students (2-10) to engage in interaction for brainstorming, inquiry, or solving problems. Student self-direction is essential.

Instructional Modules: units or packages of information which direct teacher and student in sequential activities.

Contracting: a plan whereby teacher and student negotiate an agreement dealing with a certain amount of work which must be completed within a specified period of time.

The second part of Bailey's system in instructional strategies which he states can be found within the major methodologies or as separate approaches aside from the major methodologies. Those instructional strategies most commonly observed in classroom instruction include: case studies, drill activities, field trips, panel discussions, demonstrations, charades, role playing, laboratory activities, outside speakers, films, discussion activities, com-

puter activity, etc.

The third area covered in Bailey's system is instructional techniques. These verbal and non-verbal behaviors are found in each major methodology and instructional strategy. Examples of verbal techniques include: Lecturing, reinforcing, criticizing, questioning, direction giving, and giving and accepting emotion. Examples of nonverbal cues are mannerisms, use of time, gestures, use of space, facial features, touching, silence, teacher travel, energy level, eye contact, and posture.

"The classification of classroom teaching styles into major methodologies, instructional strategies, and instructional techniques provides a framework for the evaluator to observe and evaluate classroom teaching, irrespective of grade level or subject matter."²⁷

In the article "Systematic Observation Formats: Key to Improving Communication in Evaluation" by Nick J. Cuccia the idea is brought out that teacher evaluation and lesson observation are two different things. The primary difference is that observation is only a part of the teacher evaluation process.

The author identifies five main criteria that should be used to assess the teacher's worth in a school situation. The five that Cuccia alluded to are 1.) instructional skill, 2.) classroom organization and management skills, 3.) interest in student extra-school activities as well as in class

activities, 4.) handling of student discipline and 5.) subject matter expertise. The author goes on to state that "although each area can be evaluated exclusively, they are inclusive in their relation to the total teacher evaluation system."²⁸

Cuccia is another author that feels that the process should include a pre-conference, observation, and post conference. He states that during this pre-conference a great deal of information can be exchanged between the teacher and the evaluator. The teacher can explain the lesson plan, the objectives, and the classroom routines. The teacher can also present classroom products such as teacher-made tests, assignment sheets, course outlines and descriptions as well as some of the students' work.

With regard to this particular evaluation/observation system, it is felt that the observation formats should reflect instructional variables that are based on sound principles of learning. Five general areas of instructional style emerged from this author's particular study. The five most prominent areas were:

"Sequencing Strategy which refers to the order in which a teacher chooses to present material and how he or she chooses to present it."²⁹ 'It has been shown that through the orderly presentation of subject matter, based on previously acquired skills, the chances for a successful learning experience is enhanced.' (Cagne and Briggs, 1974)³⁰

"Grouping of students relates to the classroom organizational arrangements consciously chosen by the teacher."³¹ Four grouping categories were prevalent: large (the entire class), small (4-6 group), pairs (2-3 working together), and individuals.

"Transitions can best be described as the interim period between lesson phases. Ideally, the transition should be orderly, subtle, and logically related to the flow of the lesson."³² This process hinges on the ability of the teacher to accomplish closure during one instructional phase and at the same time cue students to another instructional phase.

Directions, or more accurately the skill of giving clear directions. "The two dimensions that concern an evaluator most are clarity of directions and the order in which they are given."³³

"Interaction describes the information-giving or seeking behavior between teachers and students."³⁴ There are three measurements of interaction built into this format.

The first deals with the classification of the types of questions asked by the teacher (example: are the questions of the cognitive/memory type?). Another type of measuring the questions a teacher asks is by the methods used to ask the questions. Does the teacher use positive reinforcement, hinting, refocusing, redirecting, or phrasing to encourage participation?

The second measure of interaction is student questions. The two types of student questions the author identifies are student to student and student to teacher, with the second being the most prevalent.

The third measurement of student questions is unsolicited response. This category is usually not in the form of a question nor is it solicited by the teacher or other students.

Cuccia states that with this information, the teacher and the evaluator can have their post-conference with the needed data to discuss the objectives, strategies, and evaluation procedures. The teacher and the evaluator each should gain valuable feedback information about what transpired during the observation, which in turn will allow the teacher to adjust his/her teaching methods for the better.

Evaluation by using the products produced in the classroom is another way of evaluating teaching. This idea brought forward by Robert Madgic is based on the principle that completed projects, student essays, teaching assignments and oral reports are a realistic method of evaluating teacher effectiveness. He states that evaluation methods typically used do not focus on the classroom products yet "what is more important than what the student produces to demonstrate learning?"³⁵

In discussing the student products, the author included student essays and papers, completed projects, test results, class performances, skill demonstrations, works of

art, cooking or sewing products, musical performances, and any other tangible product or performance that can be reviewed and assessed.

Madgic goes on to state that a second dimension of this type of evaluation system should include teacher-made products. Examples of teacher-made products include tests, major assignments, and course handouts.

The author feels that "a folder containing samples of selected student works and the portfolio of teacher developed products can provide the evaluator with tangible evidence of learning, and assist him or her, as well as the teacher, to assess more accurately the effects of the instruction."³⁶

One of the most interesting articles that was read dealt with fifteen recommended ways for teachers to improve themselves as educators. In this article written by Hilmar Wagner, the recommendations were of such a nature that they could be very useful if they were placed on some sort of check list to be used by an evaluator. Listed below are the 15 methods.

1.) Establish a positive classroom atmosphere. In the first few days of class there should be a studious, non-nonsense atmosphere established.

2.) Know your students. Find out as much as possible about the students in your class while being careful not to prejudge the students in a negative manner.

3.) Involve all students. The author feels that learning by doing is still a very essential part of education.

4.) Exercise positive classroom control. Avoid negatively correcting students when there is a more positive method available. Don't correct the whole class for a few disruptive students.

5.) Be familiar with materials being presented. Good preparation leads to good instruction.

6.) Hold student's attention. When a student's interest begins to wane, change to a different strategy. Studies indicate 12 to 15 minutes.

7.) Maintain the proper pace of instruction. Find a tempo that meets most of the students needs.

8.) Use proper questioning techniques. Encourage response by regarding response, passing around the honor of responding, ask challenging questions, and pause for answers.

9.) Provide appropriate rewards. Praise such as public recognition and written teacher comments on papers can be very effective.

10.) Work with individuals.

11.) Use your voice properly. Voices should be pleasant, soothing and intellectually stimulating.

12.) Be patient.

13.) Take pride in your appearance. Be neat and well groomed.

14.) Improve your language pronunciation. Students have a certain amount of respect for teachers who speak correctly.

15.) Use "we", not "I" or "me". This tends to pull the class together instead of drawing an unneeded line between the teacher and the students.

With a certain amount of rephrasing, each of these points could be placed within the context of an evaluation instrument.

CHAPTER THREE

WOODBINE'S APPROACH TO TEACHER EVALUATION

SPECIFIED WRITTEN PROCEDURES

The Woodbine School District follows a specified procedure of teacher evaluation as designated in the Master Contract for the school district. The teacher evaluation policy states:

Section 1. The classroom teaching performance of regular full-time first and second year classroom teachers shall be formally evaluated a minimum of twice each school year. Beyond their second year of service, classroom teachers will be formally evaluated as deemed practical and possible by the administration. The first evaluation of a first year teacher will be within (9) weeks after the start of school.

Section 2. Within two (2) weeks following the first day of school teachers shall be acquainted by a member of the administrative staff with the evaluation procedures to be observed. The evaluator shall inform the teacher of criteria and policy to be observed, but said criteria and policy shall be at the sole discretion of the Board without right of grievance.

Section 3. Results of the formal classroom observations provided for in Section 1, above, shall be in writing, with a copy to be given to the teacher, and

shall be preceded by an in-class observation of the teacher's performance. Furthermore, any alleged deficiencies found in this formal evaluation, shall be accompanied with the evaluator's suggestions for remediation in order that this supposed problem in the teacher's performance of the job expected might be improved upon.

Section 4. The evaluator shall have a meeting, as soon as possible but not later than ten (10) school days, with the teacher following classroom observation and prior to submission of the written evaluation report to the Superintendent.

Section 5. The teacher shall have the right to submit an explanation or other written statement regarding any evaluation for inclusion in his-her personnel file. All evaluation reports during this contract period shall be available at reasonable times and places for the teacher's inspection or the teacher's designee authorized in writing.

Section 6. All formal evaluations of classroom teaching performance of a classroom teacher shall be conducted with full knowledge of the teacher. Closed circuit television or electronic equipment shall not be used without mutual agreement.

Section 7. This Article deals with but a single method teacher evaluation, i.e., evaluation of classroom teaching performance. Nothing in this Article is to

be construed as precluding informal evaluation of teachers, in performance of their duties, by any other means whatsoever so deemed appropriate by the administration of the School District. Any informal evaluation which is critical of the teacher shall be called to the teacher's attention within ten school days, and the teacher will be given the right to respond to said informal evaluation.

In addition to the procedure spelled out in the teacher agreement, there is a statement requiring teacher evaluation in the Woodbine School Board Policy Book. Policy number 402.2 states:

The Board of Directors shall employ, retain, and advance only the well qualified professional personnel on the staff. The administrative staff shall evaluate in accordance with the master contract with the Woodbine Education Association the services of the professional personnel and shall submit such evaluation in writing to the Superintendent of Schools in such manner and at such times as may be determined by the Board of Directors and the Superintendent of Schools.

ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTIVE

In addition to the written statements regarding teacher evaluation, there is an administrative directive from the Superintendent to the building principals that goes beyond

the Teacher Agreement and the Board Policy. This directive states that even though first and second year teachers are evaluated twice each year during their first and second year, all other teachers would be formally evaluated at least once each year. These evaluations would be of the same nature as all other evaluations conducted for the first and second year teachers.

REPORT FORMS AND LOGS

The Woodbine School District uses a two page teacher evaluation form (appendix A) to rate the teachers' performance during the designated period of time indicated on the form. This form is revised from another (appendix B) that had been previously used by the district in years prior to 1983-84. The primary changes were with the standards used to rate the teaching staff and with the phrasing and elimination of various statements.

The rating scale consists of a five category check list that enables the evaluator to mark the teacher's performance as he or she perceives it. The five categories consist of:

- N/A -- Not applicable/not observed
- 1 -- Consistently fails to perform tasks - exhibit characteristics
- 2 -- Occasionally fails to perform tasks - exhibit characteristics
- 3 -- Regularly performs tasks - exhibit characteristics
- 4 -- Consistently outstanding and innovative. Provides a maximum from available resources.

The change in the phrasing of the statements was due to the opinion of both the teachers' organization and the administration that several items as stated were very difficult to observe and rate. Two examples of these were the elimination of the statements "has emotional stability" and "has interest in total development of child as well as mastery of subject matter". To determine if a teacher is emotionally stable would be very difficult to document and to defend. Most people doing the evaluating of a teacher would be ill-prepared to determine another's emotional state.

The instrument used in the Woodbine School District on which to base these evaluations is an observation log (appendix C). This one sheet form is used by the principal to write what he/she observes in a class or whatever event the teacher is being "observed" doing. The area of "general observations and comments" is filled out by the observer and a copy is given to the teacher.

PROCEDURE USED TO EVALUATE A TEACHER

In the Woodbine district the procedure used to evaluate any given teacher would usually follow the format identified below.

1. The teaching staff is informed of the procedures and standards during the first two weeks of the school year.

2. The principal will "visit for observation" with the teachers being evaluated several times (2-3) during a semester. (If the teacher is a first or second year teacher, he/she will be evaluated two times, once each semester.) These "visits" will consist of a period of time from a few minutes to the entire class (55 minutes). The principal will record what he feels is necessary to give the teacher input about his or her performance in that observed period of time. The information recorded on the observation log is given to the teacher and time is then scheduled to visit with the teacher about the observation if needed or requested by either party.

3. Several of these observations should take place before the teacher is to be formally evaluated. Some will require the principal and the teacher to meet to discuss areas of concern. The teacher receives copies of all written material regarding performance with the principal and teacher each retaining a copy.

4. After the principal has acquired enough information about the teacher's performance from the observations and other sources, the principal can then use the teacher evaluation form to indicate to the teacher what he/she feels is the teacher's level of performance with regard to the identified criteria. Other sources are identified as information acquired from students, other teachers, other administrators, and the public. This

"other" information is used only if some sort of documentation is available (this documentation is necessary primarily if the information is of the negative nature).

5. The formal evaluation is given to the teacher and a time is set for the teacher and the principal to meet to discuss the evaluation form and the comments made on it. The teacher and the principal have ten days to meet and discuss after the evaluations is given.

6. Any comments that the teacher may have can be added to the evaluation instrument to respond to any statements by the principal.

7. The evaluation form is then submitted to the superintendent who has it put into the teacher's file.

CHAPTER FOUR
PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

In the chapter dealing with related literature, several key areas were identified with regard to teacher evaluation and the criteria to be used in evaluating teachers. In this chapter these areas will be identified and compared to what the Woodbine School District is currently doing.

1.) Type of observation techniques to be used. Four types of observation techniques were identified to aid the evaluator in observing the teacher. These were:

a.) naturalistic inquiry where the evaluator writes down what is being done by the teacher and the students in a narrative form.

b.) sign systems which employ a checklist of items that are identified by research and are checked off if observed in the classroom.

c.) category systems which is a method to help determine sequence of an event in the classroom and frequency of its happening.

d.) rating scales which are used when quality judgments must be made.

In the Woodbine District naturalistic inquiry is used in the observation phase of teacher evaluation as the principal records what is observed on the observation log. Sign systems and rating scales are also used on the formal evaluation as there are areas that are indicated by research

to be positive in the education process and some of these are identified on the formal evaluation instrument. These areas are then rated on the scale provided on the instrument.

2.) Who is to do the evaluating? The authors in chapter two indicated that there are three levels of evaluation: a.) self-evaluation, b.) peer-evaluation, and c.) supervisory evaluation.

In Woodbine, supervisory evaluation is the primary method of evaluation. There would, naturally, be some form of self and peer evaluation but not to the degree of sophistication that is identified in chapter two.

3.) Who is to be evaluated and how often? The authors in chapter two felt that the experienced teachers were not in need of evaluation by the supervisor as often as those teachers who were inexperienced or those viewed as not performing up to district standards.

The method used in Woodbine follows much the same system as indicated above. First and second year teachers are evaluated twice a year based on several observations and experienced teachers (beyond two years) are formally evaluated once a year. Teachers having difficulties are evaluated as often as deemed necessary by the administrator. This could be more than two times a year.

4.) What is to be evaluated? The only clear answer given by the authors in chapter two is that only performance a teacher can control (i.e., their own behavior) should be

evaluated, items that are indicated (by researched and successful experiences) to be educationally sound, and performance that directly relates to learning should be rated.

The Woodbine evaluation system makes a legitimate attempt to meet the standards stated above. The items identified on the evaluation instrument are based on research by the faculty and administration as to what is being done with success elsewhere.

5.) Any evaluation system should be developed with input from all parties involved. Those the authors felt should be included were the teachers, the administrators, the school board, and the public.

The system used in the Woodbine district was originally developed many years ago without much regard to the wishes of all those parties mentioned above. With the advent of a teachers organization there is now input from all the recommended groups with the exception that input from the public is limited.

6.) Is there a need for conferences between the teacher and the principal? It was felt by many of the authors that there is a need for a pre-conference and a post-conference.

In Woodbine there is no pre-conference before the observation. A post-conference is used if felt necessary by the teacher or administrator to discuss the observation or the evaluation.

7.) Are the classroom visits to be announced? Since several of the authors in chapter two felt the need for a

pre-conference, it is to be assumed that visits should be announced in advance. Not all of the authors addressed themselves to this question.

Woodbine does not specifically state what should be done in the district with regard to this question. The principals do however indicate to the teachers more times than not their intentions to visit the classroom.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY

During the past eighteen months, school districts nationwide have fallen under the scrutiny of the public to a larger degree than ever before. Questions are being asked with regard to the quality of instruction, and whether or not taxpayers get what they pay for.

This study has identified one aspect of the public's concern, that being in the area of teacher evaluation. The Woodbine School System teacher evaluation program is compared with opinions given by authors and experts in the field of education.

Goals and objectives are identified as a basis for the establishment of such a teacher evaluation program. These goals and objectives indicate that the improvement of the instructional environment for the education of the young should be paramount in any educational institution. The evaluation procedure should be such that all parties concerned should experience positive results of the methods involved whenever possible. This statement is not to eliminate the negative aspects of teacher evaluation with regard to correcting what is perceived to be wrong in the school district.

Methods are identified that the experts feel are needed

to implement and sustain a program of teacher evaluation. The need for documentation and interpersonal relations between the teacher and evaluator in the process is of great importance to the success of the program. An understanding of what is to be done in terms of time, place, and what is to be observed is necessary to both evaluatee and evaluator. A specific time frame is needed to insure that both parties have a mutual protection from delay in implementing change and progressing toward improvement.

The teacher should be evaluated only on items or areas that he/she has control over and that are recognized as being pertinent to educational performance.

CONCLUSION

1.) By comparing what Woodbine does and what the recommendations indicate, it can be stated that Woodbine's evaluation system does a great deal of what is recommended by authors in the literature.

2.) Based on the vast amount of literature, the prospect of Woodbine or any other school district meeting all of the criteria would appear to be unnecessary and unreasonable, if not nearly impossible. The contradiction of ideas between the authors indicate that there is no one right way to get the task of teacher evaluation accomplished. The various methods and frequency of observations and evaluations are just one example of the contradictions. What is to be

observed and for how long is another.

3.) It can be said that Woodbine can do more to improve on the job it does as indicated in the recommendations below.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1.) There should be more active involvement on the part of all concerned in evaluating the evaluation program as a whole.

2.) A more specific observation log should be developed with identified criteria listed. This would allow the evaluator and evaluatee to have a better understanding of what is to be observed. This does not mean to eliminate the available narrative form but rather to supplement it.

3.) An attempt should be made for the administrator to use the pre-conference before an observation to gain an understanding of what the teacher is trying to accomplish. This would not be done on all observations as it is felt that to do so would distort the overall evaluation of the teacher by allowing the possibility of the teacher to "teach for the evaluator".

4.) The entire evaluation process should be periodically examined by the administration, teachers, board of education, and the public in order to update and revise as needed.

5.) While periodic short "visits" are necessary to

each classroom, these visits should not be the basis for evaluating the teacher. There should be several lengthy observations in the classroom to determine the entire content of the lesson the teacher is presenting.

FOOTNOTES

FOOTNOTES

¹Webster's Dictionary 1977 Ottenheimer Publishers, Inc.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Gary Natiello and Sanford M. Cornbusch, "Pitfalls in the Evaluation of Teachers by Principals," Administrators Notebook, 1980-81.

⁵John G. Savage, "Teacher Evaluation Without Classroom Observation," NASSP Bulletin, Vol. 66, December, 1982: 41.

⁶A. E. Blecke, "Encouraging Teacher Support for Teacher Evaluation," NASSP Bulletin, December, 1981: 16.

⁷Natriello and Dornbusch

⁸Thomas A. Petrie, "Ideas That Hinder Evaluation - Debunking the Myths," NASSP Bulletin, December, 1981: 53.

⁹Eileen Pembroke and Edmond K. Guedert, "What is the Key to Developing an Effective Evaluation System," NASSP Bulletin, December, 1981: 30.

¹⁰Natriello and Dornbusch

¹¹Blecke, 16.

¹²Donovan and Kathryn Peterson, "A Research-Based Approach to Teacher Evaluation," NASSP Bulletin, February, 1984: 41.

¹³David H. Larson, "Dealing With Unsatisfactory Teacher Performance," NASSP Journal, Vol. 65, February, 1981: 10.

¹⁴Ibid, 10.

¹⁵Harrison M. Crenshaw II and John R. Hoyle, "The Principals Headache - Teacher Evaluation," NASSP Bulletin, Vol. 65, February, 1981: 37.

¹⁶Donald R. Grossnickle and Thomas W. Cutter, "It Takes One to Know One - Advocating Colleagues as Evaluators," NASSP Bulletin, Vol. 68, February, 1984: 57.

¹⁷Roland B. Kimball, "Six Approaches to Evaluating Teachers: A Typology," NASSP Bulletin, Vol. 64, March, 1980: 41.

- ¹⁸Petersons, 40.
- ¹⁹Ibid, 41.
- ²⁰Ibid, 42.
- ²¹Ibid, 43.
- ²²Richard Larson, "Teacher Performance Evaluation - What Are the Key Elements?" NASSP Bulletin, Vol. 68, February, 1984: 15.
- ²³Gerald D. Bailey, "An Evaluation Guide to Diagnosing and Analyzing Teaching Styles," NASSP Bulletin, Vol. 68, February, 1984: 18.
- ²⁴Ibid, 18.
- ²⁵Robert A. Garawski, "Successful Teacher Evaluation Not a Myth," NASSP Bulletin, Vol. 64, March, 1980: 2.
- ²⁶Ibid, 2
- ²⁷Bailey, 24.
- ²⁸Nick J. Cuccia, "Systematic Observation Formats: Key to Improving Communication in Evaluation," NASSP Journal, Vol. 68, February, 1984: 32.
- ²⁹Ibid, 34.
- ³⁰Ibid, 34.
- ³¹Ibid, 35.
- ³²Ibid, 35.
- ³³Ibid, 35.
- ³⁴Ibid, 35.
- ³⁵Robert Madgic, "Increasing the Reliability of Evaluations by Using Classroom Products," NASSP Bulletin, Vol. 64, March, 1980: 13.
- ³⁶Ibid, 15.

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APPENDIX A

APPENDIX B

WOODBINE SCHOOLS
TEACHER EVALUATION REPORT

TEACHER _____ SUBJECT _____ OBSERVER _____

DATE OF OBSERVATION _____ DATE OF CONFERENCE _____

Key: S - Satisfactory I - Improvement Needed U - Unsatisfactory

- | | | | <u>Comments</u> |
|--|-------|--|-----------------|
| 1. <u>Personal Qualities</u> | | | |
| a. Good personal appearance - well-groomed | S I U | | _____ |
| b. Reliable-punctual, completes duties promptly. | S I U | | _____ |
| c. Has emotional stability | S I U | | _____ |
| d. Possesses good health and sufficient energy | S I U | | _____ |
| e. Voice, speech and use of English | S I U | | _____ |
| f. Has developed a teaching personality that commands respect | S I U | | _____ |
| g. Exhibits enthusiasm for teaching | S I U | | _____ |
| 2. <u>Instructional Skills</u> | | | |
| a. Has adequate knowledge of subject matter | S I U | | _____ |
| b. Evidence of preparation | S I U | | _____ |
| c. Does recognize and provide for individual differences. | S I U | | _____ |
| d. Encourages and develops creative thinking and independent study habits | S I U | | _____ |
| e. Has interest in total development of child as well as mastery of subject matter | S I U | | _____ |
| f. Skill in instruction and securing pupil participation | S I U | | _____ |
| g. Uses resource and supplemental materials and teaching aids | S I U | | _____ |
| h. Teachers explanation are clear and adequate | S I U | | _____ |
| i. Keeps adequate records for proper pupil evaluation | S I U | | _____ |
| 3. <u>Classroom control and management</u> | | | |
| a. Practices good housekeeping habits | S I U | | _____ |
| b. Has developed proper teacher-pupil relationship-being fair and impartial but yet friendly and sympathetic | S I U | | _____ |
| c. Has the ability to maintain a good working environment in a classroom situation | S I U | | _____ |

4. Professional Qualities

- a. Participates in professional growth activities S I U _____
- b. Responds favorably to suggestions for improvement S I U _____
- c. Has an interest in co-curricular activities of the schools S I U _____

5. Teacher-Staff Relationships

- a. Has learned the art and value of cooperation S I U _____
- b. Keeps his own work in proper balance with the total school program S I U _____
- c. Accepts his share of building and district responsibilities S I U _____

6. Teacher-Community Relationships

- a. Supports and participates in parent teacher activities S I U _____

7. General Evaluation

Date

Principal

8. Teacher Comments

Date

Teacher

APPENDIX C

WOODBINE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Observation Log

TEACHER _____

OBSERVER _____

DATE _____

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS AND COMMENTS

Additional Comments by Evaluator and/or Teacher response may be attached if desired or necessary.

Signature of Teacher (Optional)

Signature of Observer

Date Given to Teacher