Performance-based assessment: Teacher perceptions of implementation and related potential outcomes

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PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENT: TEACHER PERCEPTIONS
OF IMPLEMENTATION AND RELATED POTENTIAL OUTCOMES

By
Gary Martin Shudak

A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Faculty of
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Major: Educational Administration
Under the Supervision of Dr. Martha Bruckner

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PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENT: TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF IMPLEMENTATION AND RELATED POTENTIAL OUTCOMES

Gary Martin Shudak, Ed.D., Educational Administration
University of Nebraska, 2001

Advisor: Dr. Martha Bruckner

The purposes of this study were to determine: a) whether and to what extent teachers' perceptions of a district-wide performance-based student assessment program (PBA) correlated with teacher demographics (sex, age, years in the district, years teaching, regular or special education, grade level/subject area taught, elementary or secondary assignment, year of undergraduate degree, and highest level of education attained); b) whether and to what extent teachers' perceptions of the implementation of PBA correlated with their perceptions of PBA's effects on teaching behaviors, professional identity, relationships with others in the profession, and student achievement; c) the extent to which teachers felt the implementation was successful and their recommendations for improvement of the implementation of PBA.

This study used a survey instrument developed specifically for its purposes. A 7-point Likert scale was used to rate statements about the implementation of PBA. Two questions asked teachers to give recommendations for improving the implementation process.

The results of this study were as follows: (a) teachers with 20 or more years of teaching experience in the district viewed the implementation significantly more positively than teachers with less than 2 years experience in the district; regular education teachers viewed the implementation significantly more positively than special education teachers.
teachers; and fourth grade teachers viewed the implementation significantly more positively than secondary, non-core, non-special education teachers; (b) significant positive correlations existed among teachers’ perceptions of the implementation of PBA and PBA’s perceived effects on classroom teaching behaviors, professional identity, relationships with others in the education profession, and student achievement; (c) respondents did not feel strongly one way or the other as to the implementation’s overall success but submitted recommendations that were summarized in the following needs: more modeling in the form of sample tasks and useable tasks tied directly to instruction, more support from administrators, more time to learn the implementation and to develop, administer, and score PBA tasks, more training at the onset and continuing throughout, and more accountability for both teachers and students.
Acknowledgements

Many thanks to the committee members for their time and expertise in helping to complete this study. Special thanks to Dr. Martha Bruckner for her continued support and direction throughout the study and the writing process. Thanks also to Dr. Laura Schulte who helped tremendously on Chapter 4 and to Dr. Dan Levine who was of great assistance throughout the proposal process.

I wish also to thank Mr. Richard Christie, Superintendent of Council Bluffs Community Schools for his support of the study and to all of the teachers of Council Bluffs who responded to the survey and to the follow-up survey.

These acknowledgements would be amiss if I did not include much heartfelt gratitude to my wife, Suzanne and our children, Elizabeth, Martin, and Danny for their patience and understanding during this process.
Dedication

The completion of this dissertation is dedicated to my parents, Frank and Neva Shudak who, from my childhood, have taught me the value of education, of learning, and of truth; telling me that these were things that would endure once earned. They were the ones who relentlessly encouraged my studies and they urged me to complete as much education as was available. They helped me with the mailing and sorting of the surveys, asked questions about the study, and made me believe that all was possible and worthwhile. It is with the utmost gratitude that I make this dedication in the hopes that I might, as a parent and as a person, someday be like them.
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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Performance-Based Assessment determines how well students perform in applying learning to various situations. During a typical performance task, students are evaluated on their ability to apply skills and knowledge to situational problems and challenges reflecting the "real world." By way of contrast, traditional assessments in the form of multiple choice or true-false questions are generally not as capable of measuring application or complex thinking skills (problem solving, decision making, error analysis, or induction, to use terminology from the model of Performance-Based Assessment (PBA) as implemented in the school district involved with this study) that go beyond the lower levels of knowledge (basic recall and comprehension).

There are several interrelated reasons for the shift toward Performance-Based Assessment. First, the publication of A Nation At Risk (1984) caused a panic over areas of assessment as well as instruction and curriculum. Second, since the 1980s, standardized assessment or multiple-choice assessment came under criticism (Madaus & O'Dwyer, 1999). Levine and Levine (1996) cite a statement jointly released by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education and the National Association of Elementary School Principals which asserted that standardized multiple-choice tests are not an adequate means to measure educational progress. The third reason involves the recent movement toward mandating standards and graduate outcomes in districts and states across the nation.
Given that nationally normed, standardized assessments often fail, to some degree, to match with local curriculum, standards, and outcomes; the need arises to establish assessments that do. Pioneers in this shift include Kit Marshall and Bill Spady. Spady addressed the theoretical arena while Marshall addressed more practical aspects. Marshall visited with educators and communities, large and small, across the country. The focus of the meetings was to learn what communities wanted from education and what the public thought graduating students should be capable of at the end of their school careers. Regardless of the size of town or the geographic location, the results were invariably the same: publics wanted graduates who could do more than just recall or comprehend. They wanted people who not only had a wide array of knowledge, but who could also solve complex problems by using higher levels of thinking such as analyzing, evaluating, or synthesizing. They also wanted graduates to be able to make quality decisions, produce quality products, work collaboratively, and communicate effectively using a variety of modes from the written to the visual to the spoken (District Supervisor of Assessment, personal communication, March 23, 1998).

There has also been a growing commitment to preparing graduates who possess skills beyond recall and literal comprehension which has led to the implementation of PBA in the school district used in this study. For more than 8 years, this particular school district has been implementing PBA. Each year, teachers are required to administer several district-generated performance tasks that are used as benchmarks. Benchmarks are basically checkpoints that allow educators to determine whether students are progressing toward the outcomes set forth by the district. In addition to administering
these tasks, teachers are also required to create, administer, and score two separate performance tasks of their own each year. Together, these tasks have become part of the graduation requirements at the high school level. Specifically, a student will earn what is termed a "validation" if he or she performs at a level of three or four on a 4-point rubric. A predetermined number of validations need to be earned for a student to be eligible for a diploma.

**Purpose and Significance of the Study**

If it is indeed true that assessment drives curriculum, then it can be concluded that assessment, likewise, drives instruction as well. Note the adage, "What gets tested gets done." If higher thinking skills and true understanding, rather than a recall of knowledge, are being assessed, one can expect, or at least hope, that more would be done in schools and classrooms to ensure that students were being taught to develop and use these thinking skills and various levels of understanding. This would be the upside to the assertion that teachers teach to the test. Some analysts, moreover, feel that test scores help teachers better determine student needs and thereby plan instruction accordingly. In either case, it is fair to assume that if these beliefs are true, then the introduction of PBA to this particular school district should be reflected in teachers' perceptions of their own behaviors and attitudes as well as their perceptions of student achievement.

As will be documented in Chapter 2, little, if any, research has been done with reference to the line of thinking described above. Often one reads of the reasons for failed implementations within education, but seldom does one encounter a study of the impact of the implementation upon teachers' attitudes and behaviors, even though...
identifying teachers' attitudes and responses to the implementation of a new approach can help in adjusting it to make it more successful and in shaping future implementations. Furthermore, adjustments based on teachers' perceptions and behaviors could focus on specific problem areas, and a substantial overhauling such as that being considered in Kentucky (White, 1998a, 1998b, 1998c; Lawton, 1998b) or, worse, a complete abandonment, would be less likely. The first purpose of this study, therefore, was to determine whether teachers' perceptions of the implementation of PBA was related to the surveyed characteristics of sex, age, years in the district, total number of years teaching, assignment to regular education of special education, grade level or subject area taught, assignment to elementary or secondary levels, year in which the undergraduate teaching degree was earned, or level of education attained.

The second purpose of this study was to determine whether and to what extent teachers' perceptions of the implementation of PBA related to their perceptions of changes in classroom behaviors, professional relationships, professional identity, and student achievement.

The third purpose of this study was to determine the degree to which teachers felt the implementation was successful and their recommendations for both the initial and on-going implementation of PBA. It is hoped that the findings in this study will help this particular school district as well as other districts in their efforts to successfully implement PBA.

Widespread and successful implementation of PBA in Iowa school districts could help retain local control of assessments and ultimately the curriculum. That is,
identifying covariation within the broad realms of teacher perceptions and self-reported behaviors may help in adjusting implementation so as to obtain better outcomes. This knowledge could ultimately assist districts and even states in rethinking their direction on performance assessments and standards-based education (Kirst & Mazzeo, 1996).

Additionally, Maddaus and O'Dwyer (1999) state that potential benefits of using classroom performance assessments need more exploration including an examination of the kinds of teachers who are "positively inclined toward and affected by" the use of PBA.

**Research Questions**

There were seven general questions addressed in this proposed study.

1. Do any of the surveyed characteristics of a teacher (sex, age, years in the district, subject area or grade level taught, highest level of education attained, etc.) affect the perceptions of the implementation of PBA?

2. Are teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the implementation of PBA significantly related to their self-reported change in behaviors?

3. Are teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the implementation of PBA significantly related to the way that they perceive themselves as professionals?

4. Are teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the implementation of PBA significantly related to the way that they perceive their relationships with others (administrators, teachers, parents, and students)?
5. Are teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the implementation of PBA significantly related to the way they perceive the implementation affects student achievement?

6. To what degree do the teachers perceive the implementation effort was successful?

7. What, if any, recommendations do district teachers have for further implementation of PBA?

**Limitations of the Study**

The study is based solely upon the self-reported perceptions of teachers within an urban school district in Iowa. To what degree the findings can be generalized is an issue that requires further research. The study itself, however, could be easily replicated in any district that is in the process of implementing PBA.

A second major limitation involved in this study stems from the fact that classroom observations regarding teacher behaviors were not performed. It is probable that self-reported behaviors and actual or observed behaviors differ to some extent. Although the researcher could be better assured of the results based upon actual observations, the self-reporting method allows for the potential of more cases as well as more covariate analyses.
CHAPTER 2

Review of Literature

It should be noted that little research has been conducted in the area of Performance-Based Assessment (PBA) let alone the issue of whether it has had a significant impact on teacher perceptions.

A Case for PBA

*Education Week on the Web* (1998) asserts, "What you test is what you get." This web site introduction to the section on issues in assessment goes on to state, "The debate over assessment is at heart a debate over education reform." Again and again authors and researchers have encouraged greater use of alternative assessments. Some have blamed traditional methods as falling short of truly measuring student knowledge (Wiggins, 1990, 1996). Furthermore, Paul, Lewis, and Supon (1994) maintain that standardized assessment methods do not address varying degrees of knowledge on a particular issue or concept, nor do they adequately allow students to apply what they know.

Related to this application of knowledge is the interest, motivation, and involvement that, according to Wolf and Reardon (1996), students experience when they engage in performance assessments. These authors further argue that performance assessments better involve students in their own assessments by making them more reflective regarding personal learning. They also assert that these assessments allow students to apply skills and knowledge to an actual product rather than filling in bubble sheets. Finally, performance tasks allow teachers to better match assessment with
curriculum standards. Wolf and Reardon, therefore, would maintain that the trade-off with generalizability and norming (to be discussed in the section "A Case Against PBA") is well worth it. This is why the district that was chosen for this study is not abandoning these types of traditional tests but is adding to the already existing body of assessment to better demonstrate student achievement.

Levine and Levine (1996) cite the National Commission on Testing and Public Policy which identified an over reliance on multiple choice tests and recommended a redirection toward alternative and authentic performance assessment.

Recommendations for Implementing PBA

Marzano (1997) makes recommendations to educators and policy makers alike who are in the process of implementing standards-based education. The eight recommendations are as follows: 1) Do not start from scratch. Use either national standards documents such as those published by associations and subject matter groups or McREL’s synthesis of the standards and benchmarks found in 85 national and state level documents. 2) Organize a steering committee to guide the initial and final drafts of the standards. This is preferred over too much centralization or decentralization. The former may occur if the standards come solely from the central office as dictums. The latter may occur if the standards come from each classroom teacher with so many different perspectives of what the standards should be that agreement is highly unlikely. 3) Standards should include general reasoning skills as well as subject area knowledge. Work standards can be included but should not carry the same weight as the reasoning skills and subject area knowledge. 4) Examples of performance tasks and activities
should be provided to teachers as a guide for understanding possibilities as to how knowledge and reasoning skills can be applied and what these applications may look like. These performance tasks and activities should be examples only and not necessarily mandated. If mandated, the tasks and activities become an end in themselves rather than a way to simply measure skills and knowledge. 5) Benchmarks should be included at each grade, K-8. At the high school level, each course description should include its own benchmarks. 6) Benchmarks and standards should be assessed regularly within the classroom. To ensure that teacher assessments are reliable and valid, external assessments should be given. Additionally, these external assessments can be used to compare student scores on traditional tests. 7) Progress should be reported by continuing the practice of giving traditional grades. Additionally, however, progress on the numerous standards covered in a course should be reported using a rubric which provides parents with highly specific and useful information about each student. 8) Students should be held accountable for those standards considered "basic" by stakeholders within the district. Report student standings relative to other standards not considered basic, but do not necessarily hold students accountable.

More specific to the actual construction of classroom assessment tasks, Hange and Rolfe (1996) cite a 1994 study performed by the Virginia Education Association and the Appalachia Educational Laboratory. The study outlines recommendations given by teachers in Virginia after 6 months spent in developing and implementing alternative assessment activities. These recommendations are as follows: 1) Start small. Use someone else's examples at first. 2) Develop clear rubrics. Characteristics of typical rubrics include...
student products and performances may be used to develop rubrics. 3) Allow for plenty of time. 4) Adapt the existing curriculum. Plan assessment as instruction is planned, not as an afterthought. 5) Work with a partner. 6) Make a collection of assessments that can be modified. 7) Make the experience worthwhile to students. Assign a high value or grade to the assessment. Make expectations clear in advance. 8) Take risks, expect to learn by trial and error. The best assessments are developed over time and with repeated use. 9) Try peer assessment activities. Allow students to have some involvement in the evaluation process. This also eases teacher time grading assessments. 10) Don't give up.

In light of the grassroots recommendations given by the Virginia teachers as well as the broad recommendations provided by Robert Marzano (1997), it appears that success in implementing PBA and standards-based education is never guaranteed. Levine and Levine (1998) caution educators and policy makers by citing reasons why instructional interventions often fail. Staff development must be "massive" and complete. On-going technical assistance and the monitoring of the implementation are, likewise, a must. Too often these "prerequisites" are not recognized, cannot be afforded within budgetary constraints, or are simply ignored for the sake of proceeding with the implementation so as to satisfy internal or external pressures to "do something...do anything." Stemming from these considerations are other issues such as the overall "doability" of the intervention. If it is so very complex that teachers are unable to implement it on a continuing basis, then its failure is almost guaranteed. However, even though it is very complex, it can still be successfully implemented if it can be simplified to the extent that it can be managed day-to-day by classroom teachers. The authors go on
to warn that if the proper time, resources, training, and commitment, are not present, then
the potential for misimplementation increases. The implication here is that just "going
through the motions," so that educators can say they are implementing XYZ, dramatically
increases the probability of failure. Finally, Levine and Levine advise educators and
policy makers to have a nose for trouble, to be able to attend to "predictable pitfalls."

Another educational intervention closely related to PBA is the growing use of
technology in education. The North Central Regional Educational Laboratory's (NCREL,
1998) winter publication of New Leaders for Tomorrow's Schools, "Technology and
Education: The Current Debate," cautions against the misimplementation of this
particular intervention. Prerequisites for success go beyond simply purchasing and
maintaining hardware and software. Laboratory analysts emphasize the necessity for
staff development, for resources such as time for implementing technology, and for
technical experts utilized as coaches within the schools. Although these predictors of
success (staff development, resources, and technical expertise) were discussed within the
context of educational technology, they seem to reiterate those discussed by Levine and
Levine.

Not only is technology an inevitable force within the evolution of education in
general and assessment in particular, some have asserted that it can and must be used to
standardize performance tasks. Paul et al. (1994) maintain that interactive software can
be designed to allow students to apply skills that would solve a problem or complete a
task in a "virtual world." Chemistry tasks which may be costly or dangerous can be
simulated. Decisions and products developed by the students can be assessed via a pre-
programmed rubric. If this method of performance assessment could truly become what these authors promise, then the problems and costs associated with on-going staff development, reliability of task scores, and resources needed to develop, administer, and score the assessments themselves may be somewhat reduced. The caution here is that most states and districts have dozens of standards that need to be assessed at varying grade levels. Obviously, many programs would need to be written and maintained. What the cost or even potential cost of this would be has not yet been estimated in the literature. The use of technology in PBA, however, will probably become a greater consideration as long as both continue to improve in quality. Because of the scope and focus of this study, however, the issues and ideas involving the use of technology will be somewhat limited.

Recommendations given to districts making a transition to Outcome-Based Education (OBE) by McNeir (1993) emphasize the need to allow enough time "for real change to occur," to ensure "intense teacher retraining," and to continuously build assessment practices upon research. She further suggests that districts move through this restructuring process in stages rather than abandoning traditional practice and adopting OBE in one sweeping, overnight move. She also encourages district leaders to share a unified vision that will remain constant over the long period of time required for restructuring. McNeir encourages districts to develop outcomes that are broad in vision but specific enough to be taught and measured effectively.

Wiggins and McTighe (1999) note that a misconception frequently occurs with the implementation of PBA. That is, if a person performs well, then he or she
understands; and that if a person performs poorly, then he or she does not understand. Understanding and performance, they assert, are not synonyms. Assessments must be deliberately purposeful. They must also be more frequent and varied, according to these authors.

The Case Against PBA

Because one focus of this study is to analyze teachers' perceptions of how PBA could be better implemented, it is necessary to acknowledge that some of the literature cautions educators to consider the cost, the generalizability, and the uses of PBA scores to reward or punish educators (especially in regard to the question of reliability).

Caudell (1996) states that performance-based assessments typically cost between $35 and $70 per pupil while standardized tests cost as little as $1 or $2 per pupil. Maddaus and O'Dwyer (1999) also cite several studies and publications that estimate higher costs for performance assessments versus standardized assessments. In the district chosen for this study, some tasks are developed, administered, and scored by teachers during regular work hours. It is noted that, even when done during work hours, it is possible to generate costs in terms of time. On one hand, there is basically little or no additional expenditure on the part of the district in using these types of assessments to measure student achievement. On the other hand, these teacher-generated tasks take time that could be devoted to other teaching tasks. Other assessments, such as those developed by the district and administered to all students at a particular grade level as benchmarks, are scored by outside personnel who are paid an hourly wage. The cost of utilizing performance tasks or assessments, therefore, depends upon the types of
performance assessments in question, how they will be scored, and by whom will they be scored.

Another potential implication in studying the use of PBA in this selected school district involves what Linn and Baker (1996) label as the inability of performance-based assessments to help compare students in one district with students elsewhere. These authors further maintain that performance tasks fail to track student growth over time. This is one aspect of a lack of generalizability. A child's exceptional performance on a fourth grade science task, for example, does not necessarily predict similar performances on science tasks in subsequent years. The view of Linn and Baker is that traditional standardized, norm-referenced tests are much more generalizable in this respect.

Maddaus and O'Dwyer (1999) also cite the lack of generalizability in using PBA. They further assert that there is other evidence which shows that the implementation of PBA will not by itself shrink the performance gap between various groups of students. Other drawbacks of PBA as cited by these authors include: 1) PBA is less efficient and more difficult to administer and is more time consuming; 2) It is as vulnerable to "manipulation" as is multiple-choice testing. This issue is closely related to utilizing PBA or standardized tests in "high-stakes" testing; 3) Smaller portions of pupil performance are usually sampled during analyses; and 4) There is also the question of whether teachers know how to teach higher order thinking skills and deeper levels of understanding that PBA claims to measure.

Lawton (1998a), covering recent developments in the assessment movement in Kentucky, describes a problem that arose due to changes made to the KIRIS (Kentucky
Instructional Results Information System) assessment. She describes a study which concluded that these changes caused the reports about student learning to be unreliable. The study was led by UCLA's James S. Catterall. The study's intent was to determine whether KIRIS (created in 1991 as a result of a court-ordered restructuring of Kentucky's education system and which imposes accountability in the form of rewards and sanctions based upon assessment scores) is a valid, reliable, and appropriate measure in assessing student achievement and in distributing rewards and sanctions based on school success.

If lawmakers heed the advice of the report, rewards and sanctions could be delayed for 2 years since the changes in the assessment would need to use 1997 as a base year for showing improvement in performance. One of the changes mentioned involved differing grade levels now taking part of the test. For example, fifth grade students were taking what had been fourth grade tests. This, the report said, was a potential cause for inflated grades. To suspend rewards for nearly 40,000 teachers, could be seen as a breech of faith. The lesson to be learned from this is that if districts and states are to use assessments to hold schools and even teachers accountable, they must be very careful in changing the assessments or the way that they are administered, otherwise the resulting data could be tainted and unreliable.¹

¹ It should be noted that on April 15, 1998, KIRIS was officially terminated when Kentucky governor, Paul E. Patton signed a new testing bill into law. The Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) includes a national norm-referenced portion that provides for national comparisons. Hence, KIRIS’s inability to afford within and between group comparisons appears to have been one cause of its demise. Furthermore, holding educators and schools accountable for student achievement may be little short of impossible unless an assessment possesses this comparability factor. This, in fact, illustrates the previously mentioned concern that PBA in the district where this study was performed is basically not generalizable outside of the
Teacher Beliefs, Attitudes, and Behaviors Related to PBA

Koretz, Barron, Mitchell, and Stecher (1996) conclude in a RAND study conducted in 1994 that although teachers were generally positive about the Kentucky's performance assessment (as determined by KIRIS) and acknowledged its positive impact, they were evenly divided over the basic tenet of the program: that all students can achieve to high levels.

An independent evaluation of KIRIS's ability to assess student performance and achievement was conducted by the Evaluation Center at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo (1995). This study which used, in part, attitudinal surveys from teachers, found that some teachers felt that questions on assessments were written by persons with little knowledge of Kentucky. It was also felt that teacher time expenditures on the assessments were useful and reasonable, but the accountability index used to provide teachers with feedback was untimely and slow.

Matthews (1995), acting as the principal investigator for the Louisville University (Kentucky) School of Education, conducted a study that surveyed 500 teachers regarding performance assessments. This study examines the level of teacher understanding of what is required of a particular type of assessment as well as how it should be implemented. The study concluded that the extent to which performance assessment is "occurring" in the classrooms varies considerably within and across schools. Further

district area. Finally, Herman (1992) asserts that as we move closer to national standards and the potentially high stakes that go with them, comparability of assessments results are of great importance.

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conclusions assert that 70% of teachers are using multiple forms of assessment while new teachers report using more performance assessment than more experienced teachers.

Bridge, Compton-Hall, and Gooden (1995) used direct classroom observations rather than teacher self-reports to study whether teachers were adopting changes in literacy instruction and assessment recommended by the Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990. In comparison to the above-mentioned Louisville study, Bridge found that 60% of the teachers were using authentic methods of literacy assessment. Additionally, more than half of the teachers were having difficulty implementing the new literacy instruction and assessment methods while at least some were having difficulty sharing control [of the learning process] with students.

**Summary**

Conclusions reported in the documents described in this chapter were drawn on in designing questionnaires used in the study, which are described in the next chapter.

Additionally, since very little research about teacher perceptions during the implementation of any type of alternative assessment in general and PBA in particular, the need for this study becomes all the more significant.
CHAPTER 3
Methodology

This study analyzed teacher perceptions regarding the implementation of Performance-Based Assessment (PBA) in a school district located in Iowa. This particular school district is one of the eight largest school districts in Iowa with a student population of approximately 10,000. All teachers within the district were surveyed from the kindergarten level through the high school level.

Respondents, Instruments, and Data Collection

Except for preschool teachers, each certified teacher in the district was given the initial survey. They were asked to identify themselves insofar as sex, age, years in the district, total years teaching, assignment as regular education or special education teachers, grade level or subject area taught, year in which their undergraduate teaching degree was earned, and highest level of education attained. Preschool teachers were not surveyed because the nature of curriculum and assessment at this level differs substantially from curriculum and assessments at other grade levels. It should also be noted that preschool programs are not mandated by the state of Iowa except where special education students are served.

Prior to mailing the survey to potential respondents, an e-mail was sent to each of them on March 13 and March 22, 2000 in which the study was briefly described as well as the need for each teacher’s perceptions. Also on March 22, there was a reminder sent to principals that could be duplicated and put into teacher mailboxes or posted in staff workrooms. On March 23, 690 surveys were mailed via the school mail. E-mail
reminders were sent to all teachers on April 1 and on April 15. Before the school year ended, 456 surveys were returned for a response rate of 66%.

Of those who responded, 74.2% were female. With regard to the age of the respondents, 36.6% were between the ages of 22 and 40 while 63.4% were over the age of 40. It is felt that the group responding to the survey was a good representation of all teachers in the district. Table 1 shows the data comparing the group of respondents to all district teachers based upon sex and age. Additionally, 53.4% had been teaching in the district for less than 16 years while 46.5% had been teaching in the district for 16 years or more. In the following descriptions, percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding. With regard to total years teaching, 40.3% had been teaching less than 16 years while 59.6% had been teaching for more than 16 years. Elementary and secondary special education teachers made up 11.8% of the respondents while 59.6% of all respondents were elementary teachers and 40.4% were secondary teachers (7.1% language arts, 4.7% math, 3.1% social studies, 4.7% science, 1.8% physical education, 4.9% special education, and the remaining 14.1% included electives such as: industrial technology, speech/drama, guidance, foreign language, talented and gifted, journalism, business education, drivers' education, family science, art, band/music/orchestra, and ROTC). Teaching degrees had been earned from 1956 through 1999. Of these, 20.5% had earned undergraduate teaching degrees between 1956 and 1970, 32.6% graduated between 1971 and 1979, 21% between 1980 and 1989, and 26% between 1990 and 1999. The education of respondents varied as follows: 13.1% had a bachelor's degree and up to 9 graduate hours, 6.4% had a bachelor's degree and from 10 to 19 graduate hours,
Table I

Comparison Data for the Respondents of the Initial Survey and All District Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>District Percentage</th>
<th>Respondent Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22-24</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-28</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29-31</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32-35</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-45</td>
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<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>46-50</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>51+</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>District Percentage</th>
<th>Respondent Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
27.7% had a bachelor's degree and from 20 graduate hours up to but not including a master's degree. 18.4% possessed a master's degree and up to 14 extra graduate hours, 12.2% had a master's degree and from 15 to 29 extra graduate hours, while 22.3% had a master's degree and 30 or more extra graduate hours.

A survey that utilized a 7-point Likert scale was administered to teachers (see Appendix B). Two open-ended questions at the end of the survey were also included. Those teachers therein identified by their peers as knowing more about PBA, using more PBA tasks, or integrating more PBA into their daily instruction were re-surveyed. This second survey attempted to determine whether, in the opinions of this subset of teachers, PBA was effectively implemented and how the implementation could be improved (see Appendix C). Teachers who were identified by more than two of their peers were mailed this follow-up survey. In all, 18 follow-up surveys were mailed and 10 were returned. Of the 18 that were mailed, 8 were sent to elementary teachers, 8 secondary teachers, and 2 to alternative school teachers. These teachers were asked to return a post card separate from the survey to identify which teachers returned the surveys and which needed reminders. Of the 10 respondents, only 8 returned the post card (2 elementary teachers, 7 secondary teachers, and 1 alternative school teacher).

Data Analysis

Information from the initial survey was entered into an SPSS database. The predictor variable was the teachers' perceptions of the implementation of PBA. Teachers' perceptions of: 1) change in their own behavior; 2) change in their relationships with peers, administrators, parents, and students; 3) change in professional
identity and 4) change in student achievement were treated as the dependent variables.

The control variables included sex, age, years in the district, total years teaching, whether the teacher is a regular education or special education teacher, grade level or subject area taught, year in which the undergraduate degree was attained, and level of education.

With regard to these control variables, it was hypothesized that teachers:

- who have the highest levels of education (more education should lead to better understanding of what constitutes good assessment);
- who have more than 5 years and less than 20 years teaching experience (some experience in the field is necessary for better understanding, but after many years, teachers may not be as likely to embrace change);
- who have been assigned as art, physical education, or music teachers (these subjects are traditionally more performance-oriented, more product-oriented, and less subject to passivity on both the part of teaching and the part of learning);
- who have been assigned as remedial or special education teachers (these teachers attempt to make both content and strategies more concrete and more meaningful to students' lives);
- who have had teaching experiences in more than one building (again, more varied experiences should lead to greater understanding of what constitutes good assessment); and
• who teach at the lower elementary level (these teachers are more likely to utilize concrete approaches to abstract concepts and are less likely to utilize standardized or multiple choice tests)

are also those who have the most positive perceptions about the implementation of PBA and its possibly positive results (change in teacher behavior, change in the extent to which teachers perceive themselves as professionals, change in teachers' relationships, and change in student achievement).

With regard to the correlating variables, it was felt that teacher perceptions are key to any implementation or intervention. Hence, it was further hypothesized that those teachers who perceive PBA to have been successfully implemented will also perceive PBA to have positive results as measured by teachers' perceptions of change in behavior, change in relationships, change in professional identity and change in student achievement. In other words, if teachers perceive that PBA has been well implemented, they should also perceive that a successfully implemented intervention has yielded positive results. If, however, teachers do not perceive the implementation as being successful, they will probably not perceive outcomes and results as having been improved.

Several statistical procedures were used to help answer the research questions previously mentioned. Reliability tests were used to determine the intercorrelation of survey items whose focuses were classroom behavior, professional relationships, professional identity, PBA, PBA's effectiveness, or the overall success of the implementation. Analysis of variance and t-tests were used to determine whether
subgroup means were equal or not. It was to be determined whether mean scores or sub-
scores related to teachers' perceptions differed when considering the population
subgroups: sex, age, years in the district, total years teaching, regular or special education
teaching experience, grade level or subject area taught, year in which the undergraduate
teaching degree was earned, or highest level of education attained. To follow-up
significant analyses of variance, Tukey's pairwise comparison tests were conducted at a
.05 familywise alpha level. All other statistical analyses were conducted at a .01 alpha
level.

**Instrument Validity**

During the construction of the survey, a focus group consisting of other graduate
students from the University of Nebraska at Omaha and a committee member, five in all,
reviewed each survey item. This review was based upon the research questions, the
purpose of the study and the background information that was shared on the topic of
PBA. The purpose was to ensure that each item related directly to a research question.
Additional discussions were held to determine how the responses would be used in the
analysis and in building the data base.

**Instrument Reliability**

Several groups of items were demonstrated to correspond to each of the research
questions. These items were then analyzed for their reliability using the reliability
analysis function from SPSS.

Items 26-32, 37, 39, 41-43, and 45-47g were recoded into a subscale called
Perceptions. The reliability analysis yielded a Cronbach's alpha value of .83.
Items 17, 24, 33-36, 38, and 40, were recoded into a subscale called Effectiveness. The reliability analysis yielded a Cronbach’s alpha value of .91.

Items 13-16 and 44 were recoded into a subscale called Self-Reported Changes in Behavior. The reliability analysis yielded a Cronbach’s alpha value of .93.

Items 18 and 19 were recoded into a subscale called Professional Identity. The reliability analysis yielded a Cronbach’s alpha value of .81.

Items 20-23 were recoded into a subscale called Relationships. The reliability analysis yielded a Cronbach’s alpha value of .95.

Items 13-44 were recoded into a subscale called Success. The reliability analysis yielded a Cronbach’s alpha value of .88.
CHAPTER 4
Results

The purpose of this study was to determine whether teachers’ perceptions of the implementation of Performance-Based Assessment (PBA) was related to the surveyed characteristics of sex, age, years in the district, total number of years teaching, assignment to regular education or special education, grade level or subject area taught, assignment to elementary or secondary levels, year in which the undergraduate teaching degree was earned, or level of education attained. This study also determined whether and to what extent teachers’ perceptions of the implementation of PBA related to their perceptions of changes in classroom behaviors, professional relationships, professional identity, and student achievement. The third purpose of this study was to determine the degree to which teachers felt the implementation was successful and their recommendations for both the initial and on-going implementation of PBA. This chapter will discuss the results of the analyzed data. It will also discuss recommendations for the implementation made by the districts’ teachers. It is hoped that these results will help the school district selected for this study in its adjustments of the PBA implementation as well as future curricular, instructional, or assessment implementations. Further, other school districts implementing similar programs may benefit from these results.

Research Question 1

Does a teacher’s sex affect the perceptions of the implementation of PBA (Perceptions subscale)? No, there is no statistically significant difference between male
perceptions of the implementation of PBA (mean = 4.69, standard deviation = .85) and female perceptions of the implementation of PBA (mean = 4.73, standard deviation = .76) ($t(451) = -.454, p = .65$).

Does the age of a teacher affect the perceptions of the implementation of PBA (Perceptions subscale)? No, there are no statistically significant differences among any of the various age groups regarding the perceptions of PBA ($F(7, 446) = 1.636, p = .123$). Table 2 shows the means and standard deviations for each of the age groups and the perceptions of the implementation of PBA.

Does the number of years in the district affect the perceptions of the implementation of PBA (Perceptions subscale)? Yes, there are statistically significant differences among the various groups of teachers regarding the perceptions of PBA ($F(8,444) = 4.012, p < .0005$). Table 3 shows the means and standard deviations for each group regarding years teaching in the district and the perceptions of the implementation of PBA. The follow-up Tukey pairwise comparison tests indicated that teachers with 1 year or less experience in the district had perceptions of PBA that were significantly less positive than teachers with 20 years or more experience in the district and teachers with 2-3 years experience in the district had perceptions of PBA that were significantly less positive than teachers with 24-28 years experience in the district.

Does the total number of years teaching affect the perceptions of the implementation of PBA (Perceptions subscale)? No, there are no statistically significant differences among any of the various groups of teachers regarding the perceptions of PBA ($F(8,445) = 2.297, p = .020$). Table 4 shows the means and standard deviations for
Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for Age and the Perceptions of the Implementation of PBA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22-24</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4.39</td>
<td>.870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-28</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>.562</td>
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<tr>
<td>29-31</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>4.54</td>
<td>.629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32-35</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4.62</td>
<td>.763</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4.92</td>
<td>.705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-45</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>4.68</td>
<td>.794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-50</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>4.80</td>
<td>.811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51+</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>4.79</td>
<td>.870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>454</td>
<td>4.72</td>
<td>.788</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3

Descriptive Statistics for Years Teaching in the District and the Perceptions of the Implementation of PBA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-1</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>.834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>4.53</td>
<td>.652</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-7</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>4.74</td>
<td>.601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-10</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>4.63</td>
<td>.749</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>.729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-19</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>4.81</td>
<td>.795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-23</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>4.80</td>
<td>.773</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24-28</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>5.04</td>
<td>.810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29+</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>4.81</td>
<td>.928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>453</td>
<td>4.72</td>
<td>.788</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4

Descriptive Statistics for Total Years Teaching and the Perceptions of the Implementation of PBA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>.584</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>41</td>
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<td>.641</td>
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<tr>
<td>4-7</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>4.58</td>
<td>.693</td>
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<tr>
<td>8-10</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4.72</td>
<td>.755</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>4.59</td>
<td>.784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-19</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>4.84</td>
<td>.680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-23</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>.703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24-28</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>4.89</td>
<td>.861</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29+</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>4.81</td>
<td>.924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>454</td>
<td>4.72</td>
<td>.788</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
each group regarding total years teaching and the perceptions of the implementation of PBA.

Does a teacher's assignment to regular education or special education affect the perceptions of the implementation of PBA (Perceptions subscale)? Yes, there is a statistically significant difference between regular education teachers’ perceptions of the implementation of PBA (mean = 4.75, standard deviation = .78) and special education teachers’ perceptions of the implementation of PBA (mean = 4.45, standard deviation = .644) (t(446) = 2.660, p = .008).

Does the grade level or subject area taught affect the perceptions of the implementation of PBA (Perceptions subscale)? While there is a statistically significant difference among the various groups of teachers (either grade level taught or subject area taught) regarding the perceptions of PBA (F(14,433) = 2.863, p < .0005), this difference may not be meaningful. Table 5 shows the means and standard deviations for each group regarding the grade levels or subject areas taught and the perceptions of the implementation of PBA. The only pairwise comparison test that is statistically significant is between 4th grade teachers and secondary teachers considered non-core or non-special education.

Does the teaching assignment to either elementary or secondary levels affect the perceptions of the implementation of PBA (Perceptions subscale)? No, there is no statistically significant difference between elementary teachers’ perceptions of the implementation of PBA (mean = 4.79, standard deviation = .73) and secondary teachers’ perceptions of the implementation of PBA (mean = 4.60, standard deviation = .84)
Table 5

Descriptive Statistics for Teaching Assignment and the Perceptions of the Implementation of PBA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Assignment</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4.66</td>
<td>.751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Grade</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>4.85</td>
<td>.626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Grade</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4.92</td>
<td>.599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Grade</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5.01</td>
<td>.964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Grade</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5.10</td>
<td>.509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth Grade</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>4.93</td>
<td>.762</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth Grade</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5.18</td>
<td>.614</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elem. Special Ed.</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>4.52</td>
<td>.646</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elem. Other</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>4.57</td>
<td>.711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Lang. Arts</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>4.77</td>
<td>.761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Math</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>.965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Social Studies</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4.99</td>
<td>.829</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Science</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4.71</td>
<td>.941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Special Ed.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4.34</td>
<td>.642</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Other</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td>.840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>4.71</td>
<td>.784</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(t(446) = 2.48, p = .014). Although the difference in perceptions between these two groups is not significant, it appears to approach significance. Because of this proximity to significance, further research in this area may be of interest and utility.

Does the year in which the undergraduate teaching degree was attained affect the perceptions of the implementation of PBA (Perceptions subscale)? No, there are no statistically significant differences among any of the years in which the teaching degree was earned regarding the perceptions of PBA (F(3,435) = 2.519, p = .058). Table 6 shows the means and standard deviations for each of the categories of years in which the teaching degree was earned and the perceptions of the implementation of PBA.

Does the level of a teacher's education affect the perceptions of the implementation of PBA (Perceptions subscale)? No, there are no statistically significant differences among any of the levels of teachers' education regarding the perceptions of PBA (F(5,446) = 1.808, p = .110). Table 7 shows the means and standard deviations for each of the categories of teachers' levels of education and the perceptions of the implementation of PBA.

**Research Question 2**

Are teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the implementation of PBA (Effectiveness subscale) significantly related to their self-reported change in behaviors?

There was a statistically significant positive correlation between teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the implementation of PBA and their self-reported change in behaviors (r(452) = .863, p < .0005, r^2 = .745).
Table 6

**Descriptive Statistics for Year of Undergraduate Degree and the Perceptions of the Implementation of PBA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1956-1970</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>4.74</td>
<td>.842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971-1979</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>4.81</td>
<td>.817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-1989</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>4.72</td>
<td>.771</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-1999</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>4.55</td>
<td>.691</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>439</td>
<td>4.71</td>
<td>.786</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7

Descriptive Statistics for Teachers' Highest Levels of Education Attained and the Perceptions of the Implementation of PBA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Education</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BA</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>.649</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA + 10</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>4.66</td>
<td>.754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA + 20</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>4.85</td>
<td>.768</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>.679</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA + 15</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>.882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA + 30</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>.903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>452</td>
<td>4.72</td>
<td>.789</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research Question 3

Are teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the implementation of PBA (Effectiveness subscale) significantly related to the way that they perceive themselves as professionals (Professional Identity subscale)?

There was a statistically significant positive correlation between teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the implementation of PBA and the way that they perceive themselves as professionals ($r(452) = .826$, $p < .0005$, $r^2 = .682$).

Research Question 4

Are teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the implementation of PBA (Effectiveness subscale) significantly related to the way that they perceive their relationships with other education professionals (Relationships subscale)?

There was a statistically significant positive correlation between teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the implementation of PBA and the way that they perceive their relationships with other education professionals ($r(451) = .783$, $p < .0005$, $r^2 = .613$).

Research Question 5

Are teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the implementation of PBA (Effectiveness subscale) significantly related to the way they perceive the implementation's effects on student achievement?

There was a statistically significant positive correlation between the teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the implementation of PBA and the way that they
perceive the implementation’s effects on student achievement ($r(450) = .756, p < .0005, r^2 = .572$).

**Research Question 6**

To what degree do the teachers perceive the implementation effort was successful? Thirty-two questions were recoded and computed into the variable called **Success**. Each of the 456 respondents was assigned a value for this variable that was equal to the mean of the responses for these 32 survey questions. Descriptive statistics were then computed for this variable. The minimum and maximum values were 1.38 and 5.94 respectively, while the mean for all respondents was 3.79. The standard deviation was .75.

Using question 48, which asked respondents to give “up to three ways in which PBA could have been more successfully implemented,” further analysis was made regarding the degree to which teachers perceived the implementation effort was successful. There were 456 teachers who responded to question 48. These responses yielded a total of 737 comments noting how the implementation could have been more successfully implemented. Of these 737 comments,

- One-hundred-four of them indicated that a district booklet filled with examples of assessment tasks corresponding directly to the curriculum objectives should have been provided to teachers.
- Eighty-nine of them mentioned issues such as a lack of consistency from the administration (building level and central office) in the acceptance or rejection of teacher-made assessments. These issues are
due to the wording and semantics of the tasks themselves. This
inconsistency is also found in basic information and expectations
differing from building to building.

- Eighty-five of them stated that the training needed to be better, longer,
or more continuous.

- Sixty-five of them indicated that teachers simply need more time to
develop and score teacher-made tasks.

- Fifty-three of them felt that the trainers needed to be more
knowledgeable about the implementation (Note that the trainers were
teachers or administrators who attended workshops outside of the
district and then disseminated the information to the rest of the staff.).

- Forty-two of them indicated that there needed to be more planning
prior to the actual implementation (e.g. develop the philosophy, set
goals, explain to teachers, work out the "kinks," or pilot it at one
school or at one grade level).

- Thirty-one of the responses indicated general complaints and
nonspecific, negative feedback.

- Twenty-five of them asserted the need for more teacher input in the
implementation process.

- Twenty-four of them maintained that there needed to be more
accountability for both teachers and students.
• Twenty-three of the responses pertained to the idea that PBA is simply not appropriate for the primary grades, or it should only be conducted at the secondary level.

• Another 23 of them dealt with secondary issues, mostly related to graduation requirements and/or validations.

• Twenty-one of the responses stated that there needed to be better alignment between instruction and PBA.

It should be noted that the remaining recommendations were more individual in nature, and fewer than 20 responses could be grouped under any single theme.

Research Question 7

What, if any, recommendations do district teachers have for further implementation of PBA? Of the 456 responses,

• Fifty-six were general complaints about PBA (40 of these 56 responses asserted that PBA should be discontinued).

• Fifty-five of the respondents felt that teachers simply need more time to write, administer, and score PBA tasks.

• Thirty-eight of them maintained that teachers need to be given district-made models corresponding to curriculum objectives.

• Thirty-seven felt that there needs to be better, more, or different training.

• Twenty-six felt that there needs to be better accountability for both teachers and students.
• Another 26 felt that there needs to be a better alignment between the curriculum and PBA.

• Twenty felt that there should be some teacher “buy in” or ownership of the basic philosophy and premises of PBA.

It should be noted that the remaining recommendations were more individual in nature, and fewer than 12 responses could be grouped under any single recommendation.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, a follow-up survey was mailed to 18 of the district’s teachers who were mentioned more than twice on question 49, “Please provide the names of two teachers from the district who: a) Use PBA tasks above and beyond the district’s requirements, b) Seem to be able to integrate the spirit of PBA into their daily lessons and classroom activities, or c) You would most likely go to for help in writing or scoring your PBA tasks.” Ten of these teachers returned the survey with the following feedback.

**District Booklet**

All 10 felt that a district booklet of appropriate PBA tasks matching district curriculum would not only benefit teachers, but would be essential to the successful implementation of PBA.

**Time**

Nine of the 10 teachers responded to the issue of time needed to write, administer, and score tasks. These responses varied from recommendations to pay teachers for the extra time needed, to provide release time during the day, or to use part of the state-required staff development time.
Training

Ideas on how to improve both initial and ongoing training for PBA also varied. Several respondents felt that there needed to be better initial training and that there needs to be better ongoing training, both provided by either a mentor or support group. Three teachers suggested that there needs to be more knowledgeable trainers, someone possibly outside of the district. One teacher suggested that the district provide some on-line information that could be revisited as needed, a location where teachers could submit questions to be answered during the writing process.

Quality Control

The issue of better quality control of teacher-made tasks yielded a variety of responses. Two teachers mentioned developing a checklist or rubric as criteria for what makes a task acceptable. Four respondents indicated a need for more agreement within groups of building principals and central office administrators who have the ability to accept or reject tasks. One respondent suggested the formation of a review committee consisting of both teachers and principals. One teacher reasserted the need for more overall consistency.

Feedback

This follow-up group of identified peers felt that feedback provided to teachers during the task-writing process needed to be linked to student work samples with a focus on whether the task actually assessed what was taught. One teacher suggested that there needs to be individual discussions rather than written notes on the task draft. One respondent felt that there needed to be more focus on parts of the task (the setting,
rubrics, or prior knowledge needed by the student). Another respondent felt that there
needed to be positive rather than critical or judgmental feedback.

Who Should Provide the Feedback

There were a variety of responses regarding the issue of who should be providing
feedback to teachers during the task-writing process. Three teachers suggested a
committee consisting of teachers. Five teachers suggested the principal. Three teachers
mentioned ESC staff. Two of them stated the need for an expert trainer, mentor, or a
teacher-expert in the content area (high school) specifically trained in PBA task
development.

Ensuring that PBA is Perceived as Part of a Teacher's Instruction

The group of teachers who responded to the follow-up survey questions felt that
there are a number of ways that PBA could come to be seen as a part of instruction rather
than as an interruption to it. One teacher asserted that more time provided to teachers
would allow them to better integrate PBA into instruction. Several respondents stated
that district-made tasks tied directly to curriculum objectives or standards would allow
teachers to better understand the relationship between PBA and instruction. One
respondent felt that continued training is necessary for this type of enhanced awareness.
Another respondent felt that reducing the number of tasks required at the high school
level would prevent the tasks themselves from becoming devalued by both students and
teachers.

Improving Validations at the High School Level

Several of the teachers did not respond to the question of improving the
validations at the high school level, possibly due to the fact that they were from the elementary or junior high level. Those who did respond asserted that there needs to be some differentiation between validations for graduation (junior and senior level) and validations indicating the successful completion of a course (freshman and sophomore). Respondents also mentioned the need for fewer validations; these would be in the form of PBA tasks written by experts or whole departments rather than individual teachers. One respondent explained that these same tasks should correspond to appropriate areas of the curriculum such as a content standard or course objective. The task could then be used as an assessment at the end of a particular unit of study.

**How to Make the Benefits of PBA Better Understood Across the District**

There were a number of responses to the issue of making the benefits of PBA better understood across the district. One teacher suggested having the teachers, administrators, and school board members take both a standardized test and a PBA task and then discuss which was more beneficial in assessing their own understanding. Two teachers mentioned that the focus on standardized tests has detracted from the belief in PBA. Two respondents suggested that student work and student comments should be analyzed. Two other respondents felt that some form of reeducation of teachers is needed, including a district belief statement as well as research showing how PBA is beneficial for student learning. One teacher stated that this issue needed to be studied more closely because students can have all graduation validations in place by the junior year and still not be truly ready for graduation.
General Comments and Suggestions

The group was given the opportunity to add general comments and suggestions for the improvement of the implementation of PBA at either the district level or the building level. Two teachers did not respond. Of the 8 teachers who did respond, one stated that the district needs to tighten the standards and refocus its view of what students need, mentioning that this could take 5 years. Two respondents mentioned that teachers should use rubrics for other grading to help students become familiar with them. One teacher suggested that there is a need for more in-service training and time to write, administer, and score tasks. Another felt that the district should provide first year teachers with PBAs to match their respective curriculum so they can better understand how PBA benefits student learning. One respondent stated that the district should encourage and even reward teachers who are willing to revise and improve their PBAs. One mentioned a need for a more careful study of the rationale, a tighter quality control by a panel of experts, a decrease in the number of required tasks, and the development of tasks by each department that could then be used as culminating activities to units.

Recommendations to Other Districts

The final question allowed the teachers to make general recommendations to other districts in Iowa that are only beginning to implement PBA as part of state requirements. Nine of the 10 teachers responded to this question. The following recommendations were made.

- Review the district’s standards and outcomes while differentiating between the more important ones and less important ones.
• Know what is being done in the classroom and validate it; avoid creating the perception that what teachers are doing is wrong and needs to be changed.
• Ensure adequate in-service by trainers who really know PBA and the related issues.
• Go slowly because it takes much time to internalize something new.
• Don’t make many changes during the implementation process; this confuses teachers.
• Use what other districts have already found to work.
• Ensure that tasks are directly related to the curriculum.
• Make use of Dimensions of Learning and some of the ASCD materials on assessment.
• Make use of expert committees and panels to ensure quality control.
• Be prepared to spend the appropriate time needed to properly implement.

Summary

The study showed that there are statistically significant relationship between teachers’ attitudes toward PBA and several of their surveyed demographic characteristics (years in the district, assignment to regular or special education, and grade level or subject area taught). It also showed that teachers who have a positive perception of the implementation of PBA also have a positive perception of their own changes in classroom and instructional behaviors, a positive perception of themselves as
professionals, a positive perception of their relationships with other education professionals, and a positive perception of PBA’s affects on student achievement. The study also collected numerous suggestions for changing PBA. All of these results will be discussed in Chapter 5.
CHAPTER 5

Summary and Discussion

This chapter will briefly review the purpose, methodology, and results of the study. This review will be followed by a discussion of the interpretation of the results and the implications for practice and for further research.

Purpose Statement

As was outlined in Chapter 1, the purpose of this study was three-fold. The first purpose of this study was to determine whether teachers' perceptions of the implementation of Performance-Based Assessment (PBA) was related to the surveyed characteristics of sex, age, years in the district, total number of years teaching, assignment to regular education or special education, grade level or subject area taught, assignment to elementary or secondary levels, year in which the undergraduate teaching degree was earned, or level of education attained. This second purpose was to determine whether and to what extent teachers' perceptions of the implementation of PBA related to their perceptions of changes in classroom behaviors, professional relationships, professional identity, and student achievement. The third purpose of this study was to determine the degree to which teachers felt the implementation was successful and their recommendations for both the initial and on-going implementation of PBA.

With recent trends toward statewide standards and high stakes testing, greater emphasis is being placed upon the assessment of student learning. This emphasis has, in turn, brought about more and more debate over the value of assessments in regard to both reliability and validity. Additionally, greater concern is being given to areas that affect
student achievement on these assessments. Some of these areas include greater parent involvement and teacher in-service training. Less attention, however, has been devoted to teachers' perceptions of the assessments themselves and the relationship that these perceptions may or may not have upon teachers' perceptions of professional identity, relationships, behaviors, and student achievement. This study was most concerned with these issues of perceptions.

These findings will not only help the school district to improve upon its assessment program, but they will also assist other school districts, mostly in Iowa, to better implement similar assessment programs.

Two limitations existed in the study. These limitations were: 1) the findings in this study cannot be easily generalized to other school districts and 2) all information regarding classroom behaviors was self-reported rather than observed by the researcher.

**Research Questions**

The specific research questions pursuant to the above-mentioned purpose are as follows.

1. Do any of the surveyed characteristics of a teacher (sex, age, years in the district, subject area or grade level taught, highest level of education attained, etc.) affect the perceptions of the implementation of PBA?
2. Are teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the implementation of PBA significantly related to their self-reported change in behaviors?
3. Are teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the implementation of PBA significantly related to the way that they perceive themselves as professionals?
4. Are teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the implementation of PBA significantly related to the way that they perceive their relationships with others (administrators, teachers, parents, and students)?

5. Are teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the implementation of PBA significantly related to the way they perceive the implementation's effects on student achievement?

6. To what degree do the teachers perceive the implementation effort was successful?

7. What, if any, recommendations do the district teachers have for further implementation of PBA?

Methodology Review

This study analyzed and described the relationships between teachers' perceptions of the implementation of PBA and various categories of teacher demographics (sex, age, years in the district, number of years teaching, assignment to regular education or special education, subject area or grade level taught, assignment to elementary or secondary education, year in which the undergraduate degree was attained, or total level of education). Additionally, it sought to determine whether there was a relationship among these perceptions and teachers' perceptions of changes in instructional behaviors, teachers' perceptions of themselves as professionals, teachers' perceptions of changes in professional relationships, and teachers' perceptions of changes in student achievement. The last area of this study investigated the degree to which teachers perceived the implementation was successful; the study also solicited recommendations for PBA's initial and continued implementation in the district as well as recommendations for
implementation in other districts. The predictor variable was the teacher's perceptions of the implementation of PBA, while teachers' perceptions of: 1) changes in classroom behaviors, 2) changes in professional identity, 3) changes in professional relationships, and 4) changes in student achievement were treated as dependent variables. The control variables were the demographics mentioned above.

Of the 690 surveys initially mailed to all district teachers (except those at the preschool level), 456 were returned which resulted in a response rate of 66%. As mentioned in Chapter 3, these respondents very closely represented the entire population of district teachers. Eighteen teachers were identified as experts and sent a follow-up survey developed from the responses on the initial survey. Ten were completed and returned, and this resulted in a response rate of 56%. The methods used for analyzing the quantitative responses included descriptive statistics and correlations, t-tests, ANOVAs, and Tukey's pairwise comparison tests. The method used for analyzing the qualitative responses of the initial survey was a variation of the Q-sort technique in which each of the 456 responses to questions 48 and 50 were grouped with other similar responses forming a common theme or topic. This process was conducted separately for each question 48 and 50. Because the follow-up survey focused on more specific issues and because there were only 10 responses, these responses were simply presented in list form in Chapter 4.

Results Summary

The study found three statistically significant relationships among teachers' demographic characteristics and their perceptions of the implementation of PBA in the
school district. These demographic characteristics were: years teaching in the district, assignment to regular education or special education, and assignment to 4th grade or secondary non-core, non-special education classes. There were no other statistically significant differences among teacher demographics and teachers' perceptions of the implementation of PBA. Specifically, there were no statistically significant differences in perceptions between male perceptions and female perceptions of the implementation of PBA. There were no statistically significant differences among any of the various age groups regarding the perceptions of the implementation. Neither were there any statistically significant differences in perception of the implementation of PBA among any of the groups of teachers when disaggregated according to total years teaching, grade level or subject area taught (other than those mentioned above), assignment to elementary or secondary levels, year in which the undergraduate teaching degree was attained, or the levels of teachers’ education.

There were statistically significant positive correlations between teachers’ perceptions of the effectiveness of the implementation of PBA and perceptions of related changes in 1) classroom behaviors, 2) professional identity, 3) professional relationships, and 4) the implementation’s effects on student achievement.

With regard to teachers' overall perceptions of the implementation’s success, the entire group scored a mean of 3.79 on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = “Very Strongly Disagree” to 7 = “Very Strongly Agree” where 4 = “Undecided.” A standard deviation of .75 reveals that each teacher’s score was relatively close to this mean with
relatively few outliers. It is noted that approximately two-thirds of all respondents scored between 3.00 and 4.5.

Of the 737 responses indicating how the implementation could have been more successful, 104 indicated that there needed to be a district booklet filled with examples of assessment tasks corresponding directly to curriculum objectives. Eighty-nine mentioned the need for more consistency from building to building and from administrator to administrator in the evaluation of teacher-made PBA tasks as well as more consistency in basic information and expectations at each building. Other less frequent responses included the following themes: more time to develop, administer, and score tasks; more knowledgeable trainers, and more planning prior to the actual implementation.

When asked to give recommendations for the continued implementation of PBA in the district, the strongest theme that emerged from the most frequent responses was that of a general complaint about PBA. Out of 456 responses, 56 were complaints which included 40 assertions that PBA should be discontinued. Fifty-five felt that teachers simply need more time to develop, administer, and score the tasks. Thirty-eight wanted district-generated models teachers could use in their classes and which were tied directly to the curriculum objectives. Other less popular themes that emerged included the need for better training, more accountability for teachers and students, and better alignment between the curriculum and PBA.

Of the 10 "experts" who responded to the follow-up survey consisting of more specific questions developed from the above-mentioned themes, all 10 felt that a district booklet of appropriate PBA tasks matching district curriculum was essential to the
successful implementation of PBA. These 10 respondents also commented on the issues of time, training, quality control of tasks, feedback provided to teachers, perceptions of PBA as part of instruction, improving high school validations (PBA tasks that count toward graduation), increasing the understanding of PBA across the district, as well as general comments and suggestions. When analyzing the specific responses to each of these issues, it was determined that this group of “experts” varied substantially in its specific views. Generally, however, one could easily see that each of these views was not necessarily in opposition to any of the others. In most cases, all of the recommendations for each issue could be implemented without any one negatively impacting the other.

Discussion of Findings

From these above-mentioned findings, four topics emerged that will be discussed in this section. These topics include: 1) the relationships that exist among some of the teacher demographics and the implementation of PBA, 2) the relationships that exist between teachers perceptions of the implementation of PBA and PBA’s perceived effects, 3) the degree to which teachers felt the implementation was successful, and 4) teachers’ suggestions for the improvement of the implementation of PBA.

Teacher Perceptions and Demographics

The first statistically significant relationship that exists among teacher demographics and perceptions of the implementation of PBA is the difference in perceptions about the implementation of PBA and the number of years teaching in the district. It should first be noted that there were no statistically significant differences in perceptions among the various groups of sex, age, total years teaching, assignment to
either elementary or secondary education, year in which undergraduate teaching degree was earned, or highest level of education attained. It is the absences of differences in perceptions among these groups that make the differences among the years teaching in the district that much more interesting.

As mentioned in Chapter 4, teachers new to the district (1 year or less), regardless of prior teaching experience, perceived the implementation of PBA significantly less positively than teachers who had 20 or more years teaching in the district. Further analysis additionally showed that teachers who had 2-3 years teaching experience in the district also had significantly less positive perceptions of the implementation of PBA than those teachers who had 24-28 years teaching experience in the district. In summary, teachers new to the district had less positive perceptions of PBA than teachers who have been in the district for 20 or more years.

Jones (1983) discusses the differences in socialization processes between novices and experienced employees new to a setting. This research explains that experienced teachers new to a district have already formed conceptions of the role of teaching whereas novices will be forming that role conception during socialization. This prior socialization, completed in the previous district, may interfere with teachers' abilities to adapt to the new environment. It may also affect the newly arrived teachers' abilities to make rapid sense of the new situation including new approaches not found in the prior school district. Jones' discussion may help to explain why there was a significant difference in perceptions of the implementation of PBA between teachers new to the district and those who taught for 20 years or more in the district. It may also help to
understand why this same difference did not show up when analyzing teachers new to the profession and those who have taught for 20 years or more (whether in this district or in others).

Here it should be noted that 19 of the 34 teachers new to the district (1 year or less) had prior teaching experiences. Nine of these 19 had taught between 2 and 3 years while 10 had taught more than 3 years. From this it can be concluded that these 19 teachers came to the district with a conception of student assessment already formed in their minds. This prior conception may have acted like an obstacle in the development of the conception of assessment (PBA) during their first years of socializing within the district.

The second statistically significant difference in the perceptions of the implementation of PBA and teacher demographics occurred between special education and regular education teachers. Special education teachers perceived the implementation less positively than did the regular education teachers. In Chapter 3, the opposite of this finding was hypothesized based on the assumption that special education teachers tend to make the learning experiences for their students both more meaningful to their immediate daily lives and more concrete in nature.

Further analysis was made of the constructs of the assessment tasks themselves and it was noted that every task administered in the district has at least two scoring rubrics. The first is a rubric to assess knowledge while the second assesses higher levels of thinking (problem solving, decision making, constructing support, induction, error analysis, and invention to name but a few). Upon further analysis of questions 34,
Because of PBA, low achieving students can better apply what they have learned," 35, "Because of PBA, average achieving students can better apply what they have learned," and 36, "Because of PBA, high achieving students can better apply what they have learned," it was discovered that question 34 netted the lowest mean score among all teachers with a value of 3.07, while questions 35 and 36 resulted in means of 3.47 and 3.87, respectively. This sheds light on the differences in perceptions between regular education and special education teachers. Specifically, special education teachers, who work primarily with relatively low achieving special education students find PBA inadequate in assessing their students’ progress. It may also be that the thinking skills involved with the assessments are too difficult for these students. Although no additional research was secured on this topic, further analysis was conducted with regard to teacher recommendations from questions 48 and 50. The following comments made by special education teachers support the above insights into the differences in perceptions of the implementation of PBA that exist between regular and special education teachers.

- I teach moderate/severe special education. I do PBA tasks daily and even hourly, but none of my tasks meet district standards.
- How does it tie to daily instruction? How does it benefit student learning?
- Better (more appropriate) tasks for district assessments.
- The tasks need to be more individualized.
- The tasks need to be easier to read.
- Make allowances for low scores.
- They are not applicable for special education students.
• Time to prepare [students] for giving the task.
• Rubrics are far-fetched; they need to be more precise.
• Spend 9th and 10 grade years teaching students how to complete the tasks and give validations in 11th and 12th grades.
• Rubrics are centered around class expectations, special education students always get low scores even when they try their best.
• Show us how to integrate with the IEP goals.
• Make it more attainable. The vocabulary on the tasks needs to be more kid-friendly.

The third statistically significant difference that existed among teacher demographics and the perceptions of PBA was found among the grade levels and subject areas taught. The post hoc tests showed specific differences were significant only between fourth grade teachers and secondary non-core, non-special education teachers. Considering the diversity of teaching assignments that made up this secondary group (speech, drama, industrial technology, guidance, foreign language, talented and gifted, journalism, ROTC, band, music, orchestra, art, family science, drivers’ education, and business education), it was determined that although the difference in perceptions of PBA between this group and fourth grade teachers was statistically significant, it was not directly meaningful. Hence, no further discussion is provided at this point.

Teachers’ Perceptions of the Effectiveness of PBA and PBA’s Perceived Effects

Statistically significant correlations do exist between teachers’ perceptions of the implementation of PBA and their self-reported, resulting changes in classroom behaviors.
perceptions of professional identity, perceptions of professional relationships, and perceptions of the implementation's effects on student achievement. In other words, teachers who perceived that the implementation of PBA was successful also reported that PBA had a positive effect on changes in classroom behaviors. Likewise, teachers who perceived that the implementation was successful also had a more positive perception of the implementation's effect on their professional identity (i.e., "PBA is helping to make the field of teaching a more respected profession."). Teachers who perceived that the implementation was successful were also more likely to perceive that the implementation had a positive effect on relationships with administrators, other teachers, students, and parents. Finally, teachers who perceived that the implementation was successful also felt that the implementation had a positive effect on student achievement. The contrary conclusions are also true. Those teachers who had a negative perception of the implementation of PBA were also more likely to have negative perceptions of the implementation's effects on self-reported changes in classroom behaviors, professional identity, professional relationships, and effects on student achievement.

These statistically significant relationships in the perceptions of PBA pose an interesting question. There are merely three statistically significant differences (one of which is not meaningful) in teacher demographics and perceptions of PBA, yet there are significant relationships among all of the perceived effects of PBA. If the demographics chosen for the study do not adequately explain these relationships in perception, then what else may help to explain them?
A review of teacher responses on both questions 48 and 50 lends credence to the possibility that teacher efficacy may be an indicator of perceptions of PBA. In this case, efficacy means the power to effectively implement PBA at the classroom level so that it will produce positive effects. A number of comments appear to suggest that teachers do not feel that PBA helps their instruction and assessment processes. The conclusion, therefore, is either that PBA is truly an inappropriate implementation (which, based upon the review of literature and more positive teacher comments, has not been sustained), or that teacher efficacy in this particular area or possibly in a broader area is somewhat low for these respondents. Samples of these responses are as follows.

- "Get rid of it [PBA]. Make the students and parents responsible. Let the teachers fail students."
- "...Not exempting special education students if in a regular classroom. Not giving special education seniors same diplomas of achievement (what inequality!)."
- "[Central office administrators should] write them, give them, and correct them."
- "Not shoving it [PBA] down everyone's throat."
- "Get rid of it – it has not proven to show any student growth at [the district level]."
- "Drop PBA and concentrate on raising the morale of teachers. I have never seen teacher morale any lower in 22 years of teaching."
- "Dump it – too many bad feelings by many when they hear PBA."
• "Should drop it, waste of time, most jr. high teachers don't even do it, and if they say they are, they lie."
• "Drop PBA. They are bad and they do not help kids."
• "Forget about the whole thing and go back to teaching."
• "Drop it and go back to teaching basics."
• "Why can't we just be left to do our job – teach?... Do they really expect us to remain positive about our jobs, come to work every day, and design PBA tasks and teach with no extra pay or benefits?"

These and other responses suggest that there may be a connection between perceptions of PBA and efficacy or some related phenomena. A follow-up review of literature was conducted. It showed that the differences in teacher perceptions of the implementation of PBA may be determined not only by certain demographics but also by individual levels of efficacy. Specifically, Ross (1992) cited teacher efficacy as an important component in raising student achievement. Moore and Esselman (1992) found that efficacy (personal and professional) was strongly related to teacher empowerment. Allinder (1995) found that student achievement was higher for teachers with higher personal and teaching efficacy. Martin and Crossland (2000) found that teacher empowerment is important to school climate and teacher efficacy, but she did not demonstrate that empowerment had an effect on student achievement. McLeod (1995) mentioned the effect that self-efficacy has on classroom teaching (behaviors). Henson, Bennett, Sienty, and Chambers (2000) acknowledged that efficacy is related to positive teacher behaviors and student outcomes, but asserts that efficacy, as a construct, is a topic
of debate. Goddard, Hoy, and Hoy (2000) concluded from a study that teacher efficacy is a significant predictor of student achievement in both math and reading. Finally, Soodak and Podell (1993) found that both special education and regular education teachers with high personal and teaching efficacy were more likely to agree that placement of students with learning or behavior problems in a regular classroom was most appropriate. This last citation alludes to the perception that all students can achieve to high levels, which was a theme among several questions on the initial survey.

The survey also yielded some high efficacy responses that not only lend support to the potential effectiveness of PBA, but also to the possibility that there is a relationship between perceptions of the implementation and teacher efficacy. Samples of these high efficacy quotes are as follows.

- “Require new teachers to write and use PBA tasks. Require all teachers to use tasks during the school year.”
- “I feel we are attempting to provide additional support to teachers through district staff development to fill the big gaps PBA leaves in supporting and using assessment as a tool for teacher decision-making.”
- “Get students to see the real life application of PBA – why they are needed.”
- “Hold us accountable for the quality and standard of tasks written.”
- “Keep at it and don’t let it go away.”
- “What is the next level (moving from breadth of knowledge to depth of knowledge) for the staff?”
• "Assessments like these have always been around in the skills classes I teach. They will never go away."
• "The district should honor and publicize superior PBA’s and the teachers who implement them."
• "Reward PBA achievement. Discuss PBA achievement as much as [we do] ITBS scores."

In noting the differences in perceptions of the implementation of PBA and its perceived effects as well as the potential role that efficacy may play in these perceptions, administrators must caution themselves during the implementation process. It is obvious from the above sample of comments that some or many teachers harbor negative feelings toward the implementation. Other comments mentioned the issue of time and the feeling that teachers have toward the ever-increasing load of requirements. Many of these same comments as well as others noted the need to reduce the requirements placed upon teachers so as to allow more time to implement PBA. From this observation, it appears that a district implementing a program such as PBA should be aware of the demands it will place upon teacher time and the resulting perceptions of the implementation itself, not to mention the potential effect of efficacy. Hence, administrators should try to limit the number of initiatives and assure that those initiatives are of the utmost quality.

**Teachers' Perceptions of PBA's Success**

As mentioned in Chapter 4, the overall perception of the success of the implementation was measured by using the mean score for all respondents, 3.79 with a standard deviation of .75. It appears that teachers across the district did not feel strongly
(positively or negatively) about the implementation. On the 7-point Likert scale, four (4) indicated “Undecided” while three (3) indicated “Disagree” (as compared with a one (1), “Very Strongly Disagree” and a two (2), “Strongly Disagree”). While the district’s teachers do not appear to feel strongly either in favor or against the implementation of PBA, the fact that they are closer to “Undecided” than “Strongly Disagree” gives some hope that positive changes can be made to strengthen the program and teachers’ perceptions of the program.

There is another way that these results could be interpreted, however. PBA has been a major implementation within the district that has spanned almost 10 years. It is surprising that the district’s teachers were, as a group, somewhat indifferent toward the implementation and its effects. Because PBA is the largest implementation of the district in the last decade, because every teacher in the district is required to create, administer, and score at least two PBA tasks each year, and because assessment has or should have a significant impact on teaching and student learning (White, 1998a, 1998b, 1998c; Wolf & Reardon, 1996), one might assume that teachers would feel more strongly one way or the other. Because the standard deviation on this analysis was only .75, it can be further concluded that there was not a great deal of variation among these overall responses. From an administrative standpoint, this may be a cause for concern. In short, one may be tempted to conclude that the overall impact of PBA upon teacher perceptions may not have been as strong as was hoped or intended.

This interpretation, however, is clouded by the results of question 50 which asked respondents to give recommendations as to what the district should now do to ensure that
PBA has a positive, significant impact. The most common response (56 of 456) was negative in general and most (40 out of the 56) of these suggested a discontinuation of PBA altogether. However, when further analyzed, most all of those who suggested discontinuing PBA scored between 2.5 and 4.25 on the variable indicating teachers’ overall perceptions of PBA’s success. This group is only slightly different than the whole group, of which two-thirds scored between 3 and 4.5. It is felt that the remaining 400 recommendations, though not entirely supportive of PBA as it now stands, were at least hopeful of changes needed for its improvement.

These results were shared with the district’s supervisor of assessment to determine the meaningfulness or lack of meaningfulness that they may have for her office (personal communication, October 17, 2001). She related that these results were not surprising based upon a recent finding of her own. She said that she was reviewing district averages over 5 years on scores of a particular PBA task given at a particular grade level in science. She noted that the averages appeared to be unchanging from year to year, no growth but no decline. She then analyzed the scores according to building level and found that one building’s averages were declining over 5 years and the other’s were increasing over the same period. The average scores reinforced her belief that one building’s administration was more supportive of PBA than was the administration at the other building.

To better understand the possible explanation, the responses made on questions 48 and 50 were analyzed again. Fifty-seven recommendations for improvements in administrative support (at the building level) were matched with specific respondents and
their mean scores on the variable of perceived success of the implementation were then computed. The results of this analysis showed little to no difference from the rest of the respondents as a whole.

It may be important to note that this study did not include information on respondents' building assignment. This decision was based upon directives from the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Consequently, it is not possible to test or refute the emerging theory that building assignment affected perceptions.

**Teachers' Recommendations for Improvement**

The survey asked for recommendations for improving the implementation. The follow-up survey which was sent to 18 teacher-identified experts also contributed important information.

As was mentioned in Chapter 3 as well as the summary of the results above, the most substantial recommendations made by teachers on both questions 48 and 50 as well as the follow-up survey tended to deal with resources that teachers simply did not feel were adequately provided. Specifically, these include more models that tied to individual grade level and subject area curriculum, better support from administration, better and more training, more time, better planning prior to the implementation, better curricular alignment, and more accountability for teachers and students. These themes arising from teacher recommendations support some of the literature found in Chapter 2. Specifically, Marzano (1997) suggests the use of model tasks, the need for planning, and the issue of time. The repeated recommendation for time also supports the work done by The Virginia Education Association and the Appalachia Educational Laboratory (Hange &
Rolfe, 1994), McNeir (1993), and Madaus and O'Dwyer (1999). The issue of more and better staff development supports the recommendations made by Levine and Levine (1998), and McNeir (1993); both publications make recommendations for extensive and continuous staff development. Keeping assessments aligned with curriculum was mentioned repeatedly by respondents and supports the work and recommendations made by Wiggins and McTighe (1999) who note that assessments must be purposeful in nature and utility.

These themes not only support some of the prior literature, but were also consistent throughout the study. The themes also emerged in responses to both questions 48 and 50. Teachers' recommendations for improving the implementation of PBA during its inception are similar to the recommendations that they have for improving PBA now, after it has been used in the district for almost 10 years. From this observation, it can be concluded that teachers still feel that there is a chance for the implementation's overall success if these above-mentioned themes are properly addressed in an on-going, continuous manner and with renewed determination.

The follow-up survey was sent to 18 of the teacher-identified "experts" and 10 were returned. In the follow-up survey, the same issues were explored as were found in the initial survey. Additionally, quality control, improving the overall perception of the implementation, high school graduation validations, and recommendations to other districts were areas upon which teachers were also asked to comment. Hence, the recommendations made by this group were, in essence, much richer and more specific
than the initial respondents. These expert respondents submitted more specific information as to the general themes that emerged from responses to questions 48 and 50.

**Models.** This group agreed that a district booklet of models was essential.

**Time.** Respondents noted that this issue of time needed to be considered through extra pay, release time, or the use of staff development days.

**Training.** It was a general consensus that training could be improved by utilizing more “experts,” using mentors and support groups, and having on-line assistance.

**Quality control, accountability, and administrative support.** With regard to quality control, accountability, and support from administration, this group suggested ways to make the evaluation of teacher-made tasks more uniform and less subjective. These include the formation of rubrics for teachers to follow when making tasks and utilizing review committees rather than just one person (usually the principal) who evaluates and ultimately accepts or rejects the tasks. Several of these respondents also mentioned the need to keep assessments tied to curriculum objectives.

From these “expert” recommendations, it can be concluded that teachers have specific ideas as to the improvement of the implementation itself and of the process upon which the implementation rests. These ideas reflect the general population’s concerns. It remains, however, that the major impediment to these issues and recommendations is funding and contract time.

**Recommendations for Practice**

This study shows a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of special education teachers and regular education teachers. It was discussed that a possible reason
for this difference in the perceptions of PBA lies embedded in the unique needs of special education students as reflected in IEP goals. Hence, the first recommendation is to provide special accommodations for these students in the form of additional time, reading assistance on task directions, or an alternative scoring rubric. In certain cases it may be necessary to reconstruct the PBA task itself so that, in substance, it is better aligned with each special education student’s needs.

This study also shows a positive, statistically significant correlation between teachers’ perceptions of the implementation and that implementation’s effect on other, related perceptions (classroom behavior, professional identity, relationships, and student achievement). Through the recommendations of respondents, this study also shows that some of the potential impediments to a positive perception are the lack of 1) models of the implementation, 2) support from administrators, 3) proper training, 4) time, 5) a connection to learning goals, and 6) appropriate accountability for all those involved. The recommendations teachers made for the implementation of PBA were very similar to the recommendations that they made so that the continued use of PBA would have a positive impact on teachers and students. It can be concluded from these similarities that the teachers perceived the implementation to be more continuous and on-going, that it is not a single action that can be judged to have either succeeded or failed based upon an isolated instance. These similarities give hope that the implementation might be altered and improved without compromising its integrity.

Based on findings from this study, several recommendations are offered. Leaders attempting to implement or alter a particular plan or program of curriculum, instruction,
or assessment should recognize that the perceptions of teachers will not be limited simply to the perception of that implementation. Leaders initiating change need to understand that perceptions about new programs will influence or be influenced by other perceptions dealing with classroom behaviors, professional identity, relationships, and student achievement. It may be that a new implementation could affect teacher morale, relationships, efficacy, behaviors, and even expectations for student achievement. It may also be that any of these latter issues could affect the teachers’ perceptions of the implementation. In either case, it is of the utmost importance for leaders to recognize these correlations and to monitor them throughout the implementation stage.

It is also recommended that this survey or a similar survey be given at intervals throughout the implementation, at least annually and at least to a random sample of teachers. If the themes of modeling, administrative support, time, training, curricular tie-in, and accountability were made known and were better understood in a systematic manner, then efforts to address these concerns could be more timely. Any district should not wait 7 to 10 years before this surveying of teachers is done. If districts do choose to wait, they may have some teachers responding in similar ways as did some of the teachers in this survey, “Scrap it,” “It’s a waste of time,” “It’s not worth the trouble.” On the other hand, if an annual survey is randomly administered, the district will be able to monitor not only these founded correlations but also any changes in them.

The following additional recommendations are based not upon the correlations found among teachers’ perceptions, but from the themes that arose when analyzing the recommendations of respondents.
Modeling

The modeling of sample implementation efforts is vital to teacher understanding of the new program. Teachers must be given appropriate modeling in order to properly implement a program in their classroom. These models could take the form of text, graphic organizers, role plays, or even video clips. When at all possible, teachers should be able to observe other, more accomplished teachers who have mastered the implementation. Some sort of peer coaching format should be followed to allow for better feedback and reflection. If these models are not provided, then teachers may either misimplement the program based upon faulty understandings or fail to implement it altogether due to the overwhelming feeling that the complexity of the implementation brings when it is not fully understood (Levine & Levine, 1998).

These recommendations are reflected in several comments that teachers made on questions 48 and 50.

- “Grade level content specific tasks with copies to all applicable teachers; written models and a task fair – grade levels meet and share [their tasks].”
- “Give teachers well-designed tasks that meet the frameworks [curriculum] for each grade level – not those that we bumble our way through [on our own].”
- “The district should develop more PBA tasks that align with the curriculum so teachers don’t have to create them.”
- “I think the district should hire people during the summer to develop PBAs for each grade and subject.”
Support from Administration

Support from district and building administration is essential to the success of a new implementation. It is difficult if not impossible for administrators to support the implementation when they do not fully understand it. It is difficult for them to fully understand any classroom practice that they have not had the opportunity to practice. It is unfortunate that most administrators do not have the opportunity to practice in the classroom. Many times the best in-service training that they receive is through a typical “sit and get” session or two. The better administrators understand the implementation, the more support they can lend the teachers. Typically, principals go into classrooms to observe or spend time reviewing teachers’ work. It may be necessary that they instead spend this same time working with teachers in a teaming approach to the implementation.

From the many varied recommendations that teachers made in regard to support from administrators, the following comments allude to the need for more knowledgeable administrators.

- “There is no consistency among those trained in PBA, a task that one person approves is torn apart by another.”
- “A thorough understanding [was needed] by administrators before presenting to faculty.”
- “[Administrators need to] be more straightforward in what they want so a teacher does not spend weeks and weeks rewriting a task to be perfect in one person’s eyes and wrong in another’s.”
Training

The training of teachers is an area that must not be compromised. The initial training should be, as Levine and Levine (1998) call it, "massive" or, as McNeir (1993) calls it, "intense teacher retraining." Many of the respondents in this study mentioned that the initial training for PBA was not enough, that the trainers were not experts nor knowledgeable enough to perform the training, that the training was not consistent enough and that it did not last long enough. It was also recommended that the training be continuous. What does the district do to train new teachers in the implementation? The answer to this question must include the issue of continuity. Districts employ new teachers every year. These too must have the same understanding of the implementation as those teachers who were initially trained in it.

Supportive of these recommendations on training are a few of the comments made by respondents.

- "I was hired after the initial training and was never fully trained."
- "[We need] more thorough training for the people who are supposed to implement this concept."
- "Seek out people who know the ins and outs to hold groups rather than only two district instructors. Assign committees to aid new teachers."
• "[Trainers should implement] a task in each classroom while the teacher observes. The trainer then co-implements a task with the teacher. Later, the trainer comes to observe and provide feedback [on a teacher-made task]."

• "Offer a ... course on PBA. That way, those who choose to can learn more about task development and using the results."

• "Continue with the same process they have been – it takes years to implement change in teacher behavior."

• "Site-based coaching similar to [new teacher mentoring program]."

Also supportive of these recommendations is the statistically significant difference that exists between new teachers to the district and those who have been teaching in the district for 20 years or more. As previously noted, teachers who have had prior teaching experiences have also developed conceptions of assessment that may actually become obstacles to establishing a cognitive framework for PBA. This recommendation for continuous and thorough training will address these issues so that new teachers with prior alternative experiences will tend to have more positive perceptions of PBA.

**Time**

Time could be the most important of recommendations. It is possible that if enough time is provided to teachers, then the other recommendations would somehow lessen in their importance. Unfortunately, this is also one of the resources that administrators cannot often create. Additional funds could provide for more training outside of the teacher contract, but this time is not nor cannot be mandated. Time
provided within the contract can be mandated, but it always must come from somewhere else, usually taken from student contact time. The issue of time is an area that must be considered not just by district administrators, but also by school boards, departments of education, unions, and legislators. With the onset of high stakes testing and related mandates for schools, it is vital that adequate time be provided to teachers who must learn new strategies and programs. To truly impact teacher practice, the school day and calendar must be radically restructured to allow teachers almost as much time to learn as they have to teach.

Though few teacher recommendations went as far as the recommendation above, the following is a list of selected comments that respondents made regarding the need for more time as well as the need to find that time somewhere.

- "We need more time, time, time if they want us to use PBA. The average classroom teacher is so swamped with paperwork, you can't even work with your students."
- "More time for PBAs is needed to attain good results."
- "We keep adding to what is expected from teachers - we do not have enough hours in our day."
- "Pay teachers to develop tasks. Days off to write tasks."
- "One-half day off each month..."
- "Cut back some of our responsibilities."
- "Offer paid summer time."
• "Give us two days time to just write two tasks with knowledgeable trainers helping."

Tie to Curriculum

The implementation must be tied to the curriculum or at least the broader goals of the district. In this study, many teachers perceived and subsequently practiced PBA separately from instruction. The purpose of PBA is to assess learning of the curriculum and to have students apply that learning. Some programs may appear more direct and others less direct in this respect, but all must somehow have the common denominator of increased student achievement. The means to this end comes mostly through the curriculum. There are other less direct means such as through physical plant and equipment initiatives, initiatives dealing with students' social-emotional needs or guidance, athletics and other extra curricular programs, and a host of other similar areas necessary for attaining the learning goals. In this study, teachers not only recognized that an assessment program must be tied directly to their instruction, but also complained that PBA seemed to interrupt the flow of instruction. One problem comes when teachers must give the assessment on Y when they are still teaching X. Another problem occurs when a teacher simply wants to find a PBA task to administer to fulfill the requirement when the task may or may not match the instruction. This likely relates to the issues of training and time. Teachers must know how the implementation relates (directly and indirectly) to the curriculum and to their instruction. If it is not clear, they must raise the questions and continue to do so until the issue is made known to all. Likewise, administrators must strive to make this connection understood on a continual basis. The
The district involved in this study is presently posting a schedule describing when district-made tasks will be due. Teachers then understand that the unit corresponding with that assessment should be taught a priori.

The following comments from teachers reflect more of a misunderstanding of PBA rather than teacher recommendations for a curricular tie in.

- "While I totally agree with the concepts of PBA, it remains disjointed and looked upon as 'one more thing to do' rather than integrated into the curriculum."
- "Common tasks developed that apply to what we need instead of things that are done just to be done."
- "Be sure curriculum is being taught, not four weeks on one PBA where students learn a very small slice of the curriculum - ie., World War II Bomber Pilots."
- "If tasks were actually aligned with curriculum. If the tasks were realistic. If they didn't pull away from true teaching."
- "Incorporate it into the curriculum instead of 'stop what you are doing to do a task' so it can be turned in on a certain date."

Of all the recommendations, this one points to what is truly a misunderstanding of the intentions of PBA, its place in the curriculum, and its benefit to student achievement. Again, this is likely related to staff development and training; hence the need for the recommendations previously mentioned.
Accountability for Students and Teachers

The implementation must have an accountability factor built into it. This will ensure that the implementation is actually being done in every classroom and to the expected degree. The study revealed that some teachers felt other teachers "stole" assessments and turned them in under their own name. Others felt that some principals were more stringent in reviewing the tasks than administrators at other buildings who may accept anything a teacher handed in regardless of the quality of the task. Some felt that students didn't try hard enough because they knew they would have enough opportunity to pass others that were easier and would count toward their graduation requirements. As part of this recommendation for greater accountability, teacher-made tasks should be removed and replaced with tasks developed by a committee to "fit" the curriculum for every class offered in the district. This would remove the burden of principals to review dozens of tasks each year so as to ensure that they meet a certain quality. It would also provide for more uniformity that would increase the weight of the tasks that are required for graduation at the high school level. The lack of standardization, which is a weakness of PBA, could become more of a reality, which would also increase accountability. Also, with regard to graduation validations, students should have to maintain an average score computed from all tasks rather than simply scoring a passing grade on a fixed number of tasks offered during their high school career. This is similar to grade point averages already used in schools. These recommendations would be in addition to the tasks administered by the district as benchmarks in particular core areas and at particular grade levels. These
recommendations would also address both the issue of time and, to a lesser degree, the issue of staff development. In either case, there would be less need in those areas if the tasks were "pre-developed."

**Recommendations for Research**

The first recommendation is that further research be conducted to measure the relationship between efficacy and teacher perceptions of PBA. The basis for this recommendation is that several studies, mentioned earlier in the chapter, have shown relationships between teachers’ efficacy and student achievement, building climate, relationships, and classroom behaviors. Furthermore, the findings of this study showed no relationship among most teacher demographics and perceptions of the implementation of PBA but did establish a relationship between perceptions of PBA and other professional perceptions. Further review of individual responses showed differences in what was interpreted as high efficacy statements and low efficacy statements.

Secondly, additional research is also needed to determine students’, parents’, and administrators’ perceptions of PBA. It would be not only interesting but also quite valuable to have these perceptions compared with those of the teachers. Similarities and differences among those perceptions could then be further studied to “get at” the most important, underlying issues responsible for the successful implementation of a program such as PBA as well as obstacles to its success.

Third, it is recommended that research be conducted which compares several available models of staff development and their resulting impact on teachers’ perceptions of PBA. From these researched comparisons, districts implementing PBA could better
decide on a model of in-service training that would best ensure success with a process as complicated, on-going, and pervasive as PBA.

The last recommendation for research is that teachers' perceptions of PBA be analyzed according to their buildings rather than the demographics in this study. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, there is some evidence within the district that shows some buildings are more supportive of the PBA initiative than others. A study comparing perceptions by building might point out important differences.

**Summary**

Teachers' perceptions of the implementation of Performance-Based Assessment correlate meaningfully with years in the district and assignment to regular or special education. Teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the implementation were found to correlate with their perceptions of the implementation's effects on changes in: classroom behaviors, professional identity, professional relationships, and student achievement. These perceptions resulted in a variety of recommendations for the implementation's improvement: more modeling, support from administration, training, time, relevance to curriculum, and accountability. These perceptions may or may not be related to building level administration; student, parent, and administrator perceptions; teacher efficacy; and models of staff development; but additional research is needed in these areas.

Refinements in the structure and use of PBA are definitely needed, but with continued research and practice will come ever more positive implications for student learning as well as for total student development.
References


An independent evaluation of the Kentucky instructional Results information system (KIRIS) (1995). (A Report of Research Conducted by the School of Education, University of Louisville). Kentucky Institute for Education Research: Frankfort, KY.


White, K. A. (1998b). Kentucky senate gives ok to measure that would replace KIRIS


APPENDIX A

Letter of Approval from the Institutional Review Board

University of Nebraska

March 3, 2000

Marty Shudak
Education Administration
Kayser Hall 414
UNO - Via Courier

IRB#: 081-00-EX

TITLE OF PROTOCOL: Performance-Based Assessment: Teacher Perceptions of Implementation and Related Potential Outcomes

Dear Dr. Shudak:

The IRB has reviewed your Exemption Form for the above-titled research project. According to the information provided, this project is exempt under 45 CFR 46.101b, category 2. You are therefore authorized to begin the research.

It is understood this project will be conducted in full accordance with all applicable sections of the IRB Guidelines. It is also understood that the IRB will be immediately notified of any proposed changes that may affect the exempt status of your research project.

Please be advised that the IRB has a maximum protocol approval period of five years from the original date of approval and release. If this study continues beyond the five year approval period, the project must be resubmitted in order to maintain an active approval status.

Sincerely,

Ernest D. Prentice, Ph.D.
Co-Chair, IRB

Institutional Review Board (IRB)
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APPENDIX B

Cover Letter for the Initial Survey and Corresponding Survey

May 10, 2000

Teachers:

My name is Marty Shudak and I am an elementary principal in the district.

I am also a graduate student at the University of Nebraska at Omaha and am conducting a study on the effectiveness of Performance-Based Assessment (PBA).

I would greatly appreciate your responses to the attached survey. I would be pleased to share with you the results of the survey as well as conclusions of the study once it is completed.

My goal is to receive as close to 100% participation in this survey as possible. However, please know that it is completely voluntary. Your responses are and will remain anonymous. There is no way to tie surveys to individual teachers or even to individual buildings.

Please send the completed surveys back to me via school mail in the enclosed envelopes. I thank you in advance, and I look forward to your valuable input.

Sincerely,

Marty Shudak, Principal
Graduate Student, UNO College of Education
Survey - Performance-Based Assessment in the District

Please mark the answers that best describe you and reflect your views about Performance-Based Assessment (PBA) in your school district. For the purposes of this survey, PBA refers to all district language arts, math, and benchmark tasks as well as all tasks designed and administered by teachers. At the high school level, these include any and all assessments for validations.

1. Sex: M_______ F_______

2. Age: (Circle one)

3. Years teaching in the district: (Circle one)
   0-1, 2-3, 4-7, 8-10, 11-15, 16-19, 20-23, 24-28, 29+

4. Total years teaching:
   0-1, 2-3, 4-7, 8-10, 11-15, 16-19, 20-23, 24-28, 29+

5. For elementary teachers: Grade Level__________ or: (Please circle the subject listed below that most applies)
   a. P.E.
   b. Art
   c. Music/Band/Orchestra
   d. Other (Please Specify)________________________________________
      Examples include: Spec. Ed., Chapter 1, Reading Recovery, Curriculum/Learning Strategist, Literacy Strategist, Talent Pool, or Talented and Gifted
   e. Special Education

6. For secondary teachers: Core subject area taught most frequently (Please circle the subject listed below that most applies)
   a. Language Arts
   b. Math
   c. Social Studies
   d. Science
   e. P.E.
f. Electives and Other (Please Specify) ________________________________

e. Special Education

7. Highest level of education attained (Circle one)
BA  BA +10  BA +20  MA  MA +15  MA + 30 (or more)

8. In what year did you complete your undergraduate teaching degree? __________

Please respond to the following statements using the scale below and circle the number that best reflects your response.

1 = Very Strongly Disagree
2 = Mostly Disagree
3 = Disagree
4 = Undecided
5 = Agree
6 = Mostly Agree
7 = Very Strongly Agree

9. My undergraduate experience prepared me for the requirements of PBA

10. My undergraduate experience prepared me for assessing higher order thinking skills such as decision making and problem solving.

11. My undergraduate experience failed to teach me how to design classroom activities which allow for the application of understanding rather than simple recall and comprehension.

12. During my college course work, I did not learn enough practical skills about standards-based or outcome-based education.

13. Because of PBA, assessment, instruction, and student activities in my classroom are more aligned.

14. Because of PBA, I am more likely to develop activities that are more student-centered.

15. Because of PBA, I am more likely to develop lessons that are more 'hands-on' and active.
1 = Very Strongly Disagree
2 = Mostly Disagree
3 = Disagree
4 = Undecided
5 = Agree
6 = Mostly Agree
7 = Very Strongly Agree

16. Because of PBA, My classroom activities are more oriented toward problem-solving.

17. PBA has increased my own motivation to learn more about assessment and evaluation of student learning.

18. Because of PBA, I am more likely to view myself as a facilitator of learning rather than as a dispenser of knowledge.

21. PBA is helping to make the field of teaching a more respected profession.

20. PBA has improved my relationships with other teachers.

21. PBA has improved my relationships with administrators.

22. PBA has improved my relationships with parents.

23. PBA has improved my relationships with students.

24. I feel that overall student achievement has improved over the past few years.

25. I feel that any recent gains in student achievement should be attributed to the implementation of PBA.

26. There has not been adequate in-service training for designing PBA tasks in this district.
1 = Very Strongly Disagree
2 = Mostly Disagree
3 = Disagree
4 = Undecided
5 = Agree
6 = Mostly Agree
7 = Very Strongly Agree

27. I could use more help from a technical expert or a coach regarding PBA tasks. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

28. I need more regular feedback on the student tasks (that I develop twice a year) as they progress through various stages of development. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

29. I seldom have adequate time for the development of PBA tasks. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

30. I don't have enough time to score tasks. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

31. I don't have adequate resources for supplies and materials which are needed to make tasks sufficiently authentic. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

32. PBA is so complex that it has become a counterproductive aspect of our district's instructional program. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

33. PBA allows teachers to better focus on the important parts of the district curriculum. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

34. Because of PBA, low achieving students can better apply what they have learned. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

35. Because of PBA, average achieving students can better apply what they have learned. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

36. Because of PBA, high achieving students can better apply what they have learned. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

37. With regard to designing quality tasks, many teachers in the district seem to simply be "going through the motions." 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

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1 = Very Strongly Disagree  
2 = Mostly Disagree  
3 = Disagree  
4 = Undecided  
5 = Agree  
6 = Mostly Agree  
7 = Very Strongly Agree

38. PBA tasks are a practical way to assess higher order thinking skills.  
39. Implementing and maintaining PBA has been costing the district too much money.  
40. PBA provides a good way of tracking student growth over a period of time.  
41. PBA results should never be used to reward or sanction teachers.  
42. PBA results should never be used to reward or sanction schools.  
43. PBA results should never be used to reward or sanction districts.  
44. PBA has caused me to raise my expectations for student work.

The following questions (#46, #47, and #48) require slightly different response scales. Please circle the number in each question which best reflects your views.

1 = Highly Successful  
2 = Mostly Successful  
3 = Somewhat Successful  
4 = Undecided  
5 = Somewhat Unsuccessful  
6 = Mostly Unsuccessful  
7 = Highly Unsuccessful  

(THIS SCALE TO BE USED FOR QUESTION #45)

45. To what degree do you think that PBA has been successfully implemented in our district?
1 = Highly Effective
2 = Mostly Effective
3 = Somewhat Effective
4 = Undecided
5 = Somewhat Ineffective
6 = Mostly Ineffective
7 = Highly Ineffective

(This scale to be used for Question #46)

46. To what extent has the implementation of PBA effectively aligned district outcomes, standards, and critical objectives with daily instruction?

1 = Very characteristic
2 = Characteristic
3 = Somewhat characteristic
4 = Neutral
5 = Somewhat uncharacteristic
6 = Uncharacteristic
7 = Very Uncharacteristic

(This scale to be used for Question #48)

47. To what degree would you use the following descriptors to characterize the implementation of PBA in this school district.

a) Unmanageable......................................................1 2 3 4 5 6 7
b) Burdensome......................................................1 2 3 4 5 6 7
c) Difficult but attainable........................................1 2 3 4 5 6 7
d) Simply part of what should be expected..............1 2 3 4 5 6 7
e) Workable ............................................................1 2 3 4 5 6 7
f) Challenging........................................................1 2 3 4 5 6 7
g) Beneficial for student learning..........................1 2 3 4 5 6 7

48. In the space below, please describe up to three ways in which PBA could have been more successfully implemented.
49. Please provide the names of two teachers from your building who:
   a) Use PBA tasks above and beyond the district's requirements,
   b) Seem to be able to integrate the spirit of PBA into their daily lessons and classroom activities, or
   c) You would most likely go to for help in writing or scoring your PBA tasks.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

51. Please describe below what the district should do now to ensure that PBA will have a significant, positive impact on the attitudes and behaviors of classroom teachers as well as the achievement of students.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Thank you very much for completing this survey. Your ideas and feedback are greatly appreciated.
APPENDIX C

Cover Letter for Follow-Up Survey and Corresponding Survey

September 26, 2000

Teachers:

My name is Marty Shudak, and I am a 6th grade teacher within this school district.

I am also a graduate student at the University of Nebraska at Omaha and am conducting a study on the effectiveness of Performance-Based Assessment in our school district.

You may have already completed an initial survey which I distributed last spring. I greatly appreciate the input I received from over 450 teachers on the initial survey. Respondents to that survey identified you as a teacher who uses PBA tasks above and beyond the district requirement, who is able to integrate the spirit of PBA into daily lessons and classroom activities, and whom they would likely go to for help in writing or scoring PBA tasks. Because of their recommendation, this second survey is being sent to you to gain more specific information and your expert recommendations for PBA.

I would greatly appreciate your responses to the attached survey. I hope to share the results and conclusions of the initial and current surveys with district teachers, administrators, and school board members in order to provide important information about Performance-Based Assessment in our district. This survey is completely voluntary and anonymous; no recommendations will result in identification of the participants. Since your responses are extremely important in assessing the current program and in making recommendations for improvement, I urge you to return the survey as quickly as possible; a 100% return rate will better ensure the reliability of the survey.

Please send the completed survey back to me via school mail in the enclosed envelopes. As you do this, please send the enclosed post card to me in the U.S. Mail. This way, I can keep track of which experts returned their surveys without identifying which surveys belong to whom.

I thank you in advance, and I look forward to your valuable input.

Sincerely,

Marty Shudak, 6th Grade Teacher
Follow Up Survey for Teachers Identified in Question 50

1. Do you feel that a district booklet of appropriate PBA tasks matching district Frameworks, objectives, outcomes, standards, benchmarks, etc. would benefit teachers? __________ If so, what should be included in such a booklet?

2. How might the district supply added time to write, administer and score tasks?

3. How could the district best provide more and better training (initial and ongoing) for PBA?

4. How could the district or building administrators best guarantee "quality control" of teacher-made tasks?

5. What type of feedback would be most beneficial to teachers as they develop tasks?

Who should provide this feedback?

6. How can PBAs (and associated assessment procedures) come to be seen as part of instruction rather than as an interruption to instruction?

7. What suggestions do you have for improving the timing, quality, and meaningfulness of validations at the high school level?

8. How could the benefits of PBA be better understood across the district?

9. Do you have any other suggestions for the improvement of the implementation of PBA in Council Bluffs (either at the building level or at the district level)?

10. What general recommendations would you make to other districts in Iowa that are only beginning to implement PBA as part of state requirements?